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UNDER TWELVE FLAGS

ANNETTE L. NOBLE

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UNDER TWELVE FLAGS

BY

ANNETTE L. NOBLE.

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ELISE THE HUGUENOT MAID.

CHAPTER I.

THE SHADOW OF CHANGE.

It was a cold stormy night in late winter when a young girl, standing at the window of her room, said: "Who would think, Lizette, that our bright, beautiful Paris could be the dismal place this weather makes it seem?"

'The good Lord, who sends all sorts of weather, gives Paris only its share of cold."

Old Lizette spoke very grimly; for some reason she had been solemn all day. Lizette was usually cheerful; so Elise fancied that she also felt the depressing influence of the long storm, for all her moral precepts.

"Oh! but Paris is so lovely in the summer, when the streets are bright, and the flower markets like gardens of beauty! Don't you long for a day under the trees in the Bois?"

"Life is not all flowers and frolics, as you will find only too soon, my *Petite!*"

The "Little One," as Lizette called her, was a tall, womanly girl of eighteen, with eyes sweet and beauti-

ful as the violets that came so early in the markets of her much loved Paris. This night as she watched the sleet and wind sweep through the almost deserted streets, she thought (without any discontent, however) that her own life had been far from "all frolic and flowers," as Lizette seemed to imply in her last solemn speech. It had been a very grave and quiet life, and one wholly lacking in even those small excitements which make up the innocent pleasures of French girls of her class. Elise was the child of a Huguenot minister who married late in life. She remembered her mother as a bedridden invalid during all her own childhood. The little girl never went to school nor really knew what it was to play with other children. She never had any childish things to "put away," for a cat that died of old age had been her only playmate. Mornings, while her mother rested, Lizette had taught her housekeeping. Afternoons she sat by her mother's side and learned to sew or to do exquisite embroidery. In the long evenings her father taught her what other girls were learning in schools. For exercise she went to market with Lizette; her rare holidays were spent in the Bois de Boulogne or the gardens of Versailles. When Lizette had been with them a long time, and Elise was fifteen years old, her mother died. After that Elise became more of a companion to her father.

A sudden thought that he was then alone made her turn and leave the bare little chamber, going to the "salon," as was called the best furnished and warmest

room of the little "appartement" on the third floor of an old house in the "Latin Quarter" of Paris. Her father did not notice her coming, so lost was he in thought, as he sat gazing into the glowing fire. "Pere Rouelle" was a silvery haired, stern looking old man, whose sweet smile attracted people who at first supposed him grim. His ancestors had been Huguenot nobles at the court of Henry of Navarre. From them he inherited many fine qualities, but no estates. All these went to nobles who could change their religion according to court fashions.

"Dinner is served," said Lizette, entering with a dish of savory soup. She put it down on the spotless cloth, giving a peculiar look at Elise as she said: "Mademoiselle, will you help me a moment with the pudding sauce?"

When they were well outside the door, Lizette said: "He is in some trouble. For two days he has not eaten enough to keep your little canary, Jacque, alive; make him eat well first, and then find out if you can help him. No man sighs as he has done all day without a burden on his heart."

Puzzled and troubled, Elise took her place at the table, and by every simple art tried to tempt her father's appetite. Dinner over, she drew her chair close to his, saying:

"Dear papa, does the cold weather make you feel ill? You are so pale to-day!"

He smoothed her hair lovingly, saying: "No,

Petite, I am not ill, but much troubled at a most unexpected occurrence—a disaster."

"May I not know it, father dear?"

After a moment's thought he replied: "Yes; it is best for you to know. Do you remember a month or two ago when Lizette was urging us to go for a week to the seaside? The good old soul was worried over my health, but you thought her taking too great a liberty because she said to me that although my income was larger, I grew more economical each year."

"Surely, papa, it was——"

"She was quite right; only she did not understand my motives. If I had entered the Roman Catholic Church when I was a young man I should have inherited a large fortune, but refusing to go against my conscience, I became dependent on the modest support given me by my own flock. When your mother was laid aside she impressed on me the wisdom of saving, each year, a little sum, which slowly increasing would be for you hereafter. A sum that, if you married, would be your dowry; if you remained single—well, in that case we planned out your future. With a half of these savings you could buy a little home in the country, where living is cheap, and there, earning something by the fine embroidery she has taught you (having, too, some interest money), you would be at least secured from want. In order to do this, and yet give to the poor and needy, we have had to be very economical. Your mother had rare judg-

ment, Elise; I have no head for business. I invested every franc as she advised, and she died happy in the belief that your future was secure. One year ago I was obliged to re-invest that money. I took every precaution, but I was grossly deceived."

The old man cowered over the fire with a shiver; his voice trembled as he went on: "Last week a bank failed—my savings for fifteen years are all gone—every sou lost!"

"Oh, what a pity, father! But don't be so sorrowful. You are well, and while you live all is well with us. When you go, as mother went, I would wish to pray God that I might go also; but if the worst comes, and I must live without you, my dear, dear father, I shall not want; never fear for me! I can earn something with my needle. I could go as companion to some invalid or old lady. You have taught me, too, that God is the father of the fatherless."

Her father's face lit up with a glow as if from the gleaming fire. He exclaimed, "You do, indeed, comfort me, my child! You are like your blessed mother."

Elise then ventured a question which she had asked before without eliciting definite information.

"Have we no relatives, father? I am not thinking of their money, but only wondering if no one is interested in us on account of kinship."

"I have a few very rich cousins who ignore my existence. Your mother, whom I married when she was very young, came from a Roman Catholic family

in Nimes. They were tradespeople: she was by nature a rare sweet lady; they were of quite another sort, coarser, uneducated, in manners unrefined, in religion bigoted. They disliked me; I was not sorry that they never visited us later. Perhaps I am prejudiced—I cannot like to think of you with any of them."

"That need never be, father."

He looked at Elise reflectively a moment, thinking for almost the first time of her personal appearance since she had grown up. Now he almost regretted her beauty—for she was undeniably beautiful. She had long dark lashes, shading soft blue eyes, a clear olive complexion, and silky black hair curling around a head like a Greek girl's. He aroused himself suddenly to say very earnestly, "Elise, if anything serious happens to me while you are still young, you must not for one moment think to take care of yourself! You must go at once to those relatives in Nimes. Alone in Paris you would be like a child in a forest full of wolves. Your mother's people are honest and might prove very kind."

"Yes, dear papa. But let us pray God to spare you until you are as old as 'Papa Michaud,' who lives 'en haut'—he is almost ninety-nine; and then, you see, I will be like Mademoiselle Jeanne, a nice old maid entirely able to care for myself and you as well."

Honest Lizette, lurking outside the door, was much comforted at that moment to hear her dear master

laugh outright; for this "Jeanne" was six feet tall, strong as an Amazon; she was wont to lift her feeble father and trot about with him as if he were a baby.

Yes, Elise had cheered her father, although she had said nothing at all wise or remarkable. She trimmed the lamp, brought her embroidery and sat by his side. That night he told her more than ever before of her mother's early life and much that he left untold she guessed. Her father was by birth an aristocrat; her mother's people were of the class called "bourgeois" or the lower middle class, so it was a case of social oil and water. At ten o'clock Pere Rouelle read a Psalm and prayed with his little household; then Elise kissed him, as she had done every night of her life, and went to rest. Outside the house the storm raged until morning, then snow began to fall, coming softly down, covering everything with a mantle white and spotless. In the morning it was so cold that Lizette bade Elise to "stay quiet until there was a good fire in the salon."

It was therefore later than usual when Elise sat down to her cup of coffee and roll, the simple breakfast common in France and eaten without ceremony.

"When I hear papa I will take his coffee to him, Lizette," said Elise, "and you can go alone to market this morning."

Lizette departed with her basket and before her return a warm sun had melted the light snow.

"Papa has not made a sound since you went away, Lizette," exclaimed Elise, as she came in. "I have made him some fresh coffee and shall take it to him now; perhaps he does not feel well."

Lizette had scarcely put down her burden when she heard a loud cry of alarm and distress. She rushed into the pastor's sleeping room, and then there was no need to ask why Elise had sunk on her knees by her father's bed. His face was as cold and white as the snow just vanished. Death had effaced the marks of age from his countenance and brought out strongly the lineaments of a line of nobly born ancestors—as earth counts nobility; or perhaps that beauty was the impress left by the Holy Spirit, who once tabernacled in that body.

Poor Elise! for a few days she was like a smitten, bewildered child, sitting dumb in her sorrow, while Lizette did all there was to do. Friends began to come—oh, such hosts of them—and old parishioners. Everybody had loved the good old man—the sick, the poor, the old and the young. All grieved for Elise; but none thought of her as penniless.

The day when Pere Rouelle's body was laid in the grave was warm and sunny like spring-time. A bird sang as the mourners stood with uncovered heads. On the way home the thought came to Elise, as it has come to thousands before her: how strange it was that all life should go on in these busy city streets and *he* be out of it all forever!

"Paris is the same—only everything is different for me," she murmured.

Then like a new shock came the recollection of her father's words: "*You must go at once to Nimes.*"

CHAPTER II.

NEW SCENES AND NEW FACES.

A French girl is in many ways very dependent and ignorant of the world. Elise at first imagined that she had only to find the address of some one of her mother's relatives, to pack her trunk and to start for Nimes. Old Lizette was more practical; after hearing what Elise had to say, she sent for Pere Rouelle's friend, Monsieur Levois, who was also a lawyer. He was shocked to know of the state of affairs, but at once undertook to do his best for the orphan girl. He declared that he was the one to write to Nimes, and he did so—after he had written elsewhere. Monsieur Levois was a brisk little old man, most peculiar in appearance, because his wig was red and his mustache white; Elise fancied that they once matched; but time, while changing one, had no power over the other, and Monsieur himself was too busy a man to bother over trifles.

He darted into her little salon one day with a letter from his sister, and forthwith explained that she was a dear old gentlewoman, living without children of

her own in a chateau near Nimes; that the estate, although run down, was charming, and that Madame, his sister, lived in comfort, even if she was far from being rich. He said that she had faithful servants, but was very lonely since the death of a granddaughter not long before. Monsieur had written her about Elise, whose father she had known well. Now Madame begged Elise to come to her; she would love, maintain and protect her. In return Elise would fill the place of her granddaughter.

"The very place of all others for you," cried old Lizette; "your father could ask nothing better for you, if he were to know."

"But he is not here to say that, and his last words to me were, 'Go to Nimes!'"

"Very true, my dear," said Monsieur Levois; "but he knew of no other home for you. When you hear from Nimes—well, my plan may be more to your mind."

"Oh, Monsieur Levois! I much prefer it *now;* I dread these unknown relations more than words can tell," cried Elise, adding, "but I must do as my father wished."

Lizette and the lawyer had a private conversation after that, and Lizette was for "forcing" Elise to go to his sister.

"No, we must not do that," he replied, "for then we might wrong Elise in the end. My sister's estate goes back to her husband's family when she dies, so

Elise would again be poor. These Nimes people may be able to do far more for her; we must not meddle too much."

"True," sighed Lizette, "but I think they are vulgar shop folks."

"Oh, what pride!" laughed the old lawyer.

They did not hear from Nimes immediately, but there was enough to do in the meantime. Elise sold all their household effects except a few keepsakes of her parents. Monsieur disposed of the pastor's library (which contained a number of rare books) at a fair price, so every day the dear old home grew more desolate and bare looking. One day, when the house was almost despoiled of furniture, the long expected letter came. It was from a Madame Toinette Girard, the mother's half-sister, and was not wholly lacking in sympathy. Lizette said that it "was sensible," but Elise vaguely felt a lack of some kind—perhaps of the refinement always manifest in her mother's words. Madame Girard offered a home to her niece and said she should expect from her just what she should require in her own daughter. Her husband was dead, but she retained an interest in the shop, still carried on by his partner. Her home was in the flat above the shop. She regretted that Elise was not "in the true Church," but should not interfere with her "notions of religion." She advised her to start at night, for then she would reach Nimes in the daytime. After they had read the letter, Elise said, "I

will start to-morrow night; Monsieur can so telegraph her."

Lizette began to groan, and Elise fled, lest all her calmness vanish. The rest of that day her heart was like lead, and when night came she stole into her father's room in the moonlight, kneeling there, praying, thinking, praying again, till a bell in the near tower struck twelve. The next evening she took the train for Nimes. Lizette, her eyes swollen with weeping, could only sob. Monsieur Levois gave her his sister's address, saying: "In any trouble go right to her; she is only about twenty miles from Nimes; give her this letter from me and all will be well." Then as the train was moving he whispered, "One word more —Don't look backward too much; get the good out of each hour; trust God with your future." Until they were out of the *Gare de Lyon* she saw the old lawyer, amiably nodding his queer little red head and twirling the white mustache. Then for a few moments Elise was glad the compartment was rather dark, she was so busy swallowing big lumps in her throat. Fortunately soon after that she realized that she was very weary, and then, after all, the night was gone before she thought it possible.

When she had taken a simple breakfast the scenery interested her greatly, for Elise had never traveled. It was spring, and lovely weather. The fields were now green with winter grain, or brown where upturned by the plow. Nothing could be more pictur-

esque than the low gray villages, nestling in every quiet valley, always with a high shouldered church in the middle, like a motherly old brown hen sitting among her chickens. Elise, watching the peasants issuing from their tiny old cottages, wondered if a newly married couple ever had a new house. She fancied not, but that Pierre must always take his father's old stone cottage, just as Pierre's *pere* took his grandsire's, that once blue-bloused, sabotted old laborer now resting in the rural graveyard under a gilt cross. As the train sped along she saw fascinating roads gleaming white between endless borders of tall poplars, and she wished that she could follow them along to those mysterious places into which they led —places enticing because unknown. Again, upon far heights gleamed the sunlit spires of century old monasteries—homes of quiet brotherhoods, where she fancied the poor inmates praying, or more likely vegetating, according as their soul or body predominated. All the brown hills and the vivid green valleys were alike flooded with the morning splendor of sunshine; only far away flocks of sheep were indistinct; she thought them bits of gray rock on the hillsides until they began to move.

Time did not drag until they were a few miles from Nimes, and then Elise thought they would never get there. At last the train drew up in the station, and Elise got out, wondering if she should know her aunt. But she was almost instantly seized, embraced, and

kissed on both cheeks by a very stout and breathless woman, who next snatched the paper denoting the number of her baggage, dragging her away to identify the same. Aunt Girard had a loud voice, a high nose, a flushed face, and something very like a mustache. A faster talker Elise had never heard. The baggage found, they had it piled on and in a carriage, then squeezing themselves among bags and boxes, Madame gave the driver an address. The streets seemed dull to Elise, but she had scarcely looked out before they arrived. The baggage was first sent up, then, with evident pride, Madame led Elise through her large and, in a sense, gorgeous rooms. Such a number of gilt framed mirrors, so many red plush sofas and chairs, so great a show of color, gilding and queer bric-a-brac Elise had never seen, except in a second-hand shop in Paris. It was much after noon, but Madame had hospitably delayed the luncheon, and now, only waiting till she had removed her outer garments, hurried Elise to the table. Here, too, was a glitter of crystal, a display of china, with a lavish amount of food new to the girl. But better far than table or house was the sight of her aunt's serving woman. Ninon was not old, like Lizette, nor homely, in fact she was almost handsome. There was, moreover, a goodness in her face, a something in the smile which she gave the orphan girl, that made her think of that beautiful Bible expression, "loving kindness."

"Antonio could not wait for us," said her aunt,

doing the honors of the table and talking every moment.

Elise, reflecting meantime that she had only to listen and she would know everything she wished without asking any questions, soon learned that her aunt had married when Elise's mother was a child; the two had different mothers, so it came about that the half-sisters were almost strangers.

"All other relatives on your side are dead, so I had to come to your relief. But you are welcome, if we can agree," said Madame Girard, urging her to take more salad, and going on: "Antonio is therefore no relation to you; I was thinking he was your cousin; well, you can call him one."

It seemed as if Madame Girard could not talk without referring to Antonio. He was her nephew; he was so handsome, so brilliant, so good to the poor, so beloved and—why, everybody seemed to do honor to Antonio, for some reason not apparent to Elise.

"What! have you not read of him in the Paris journals? Oh, but they do not have *that sort of thing* in northern France—the more is the pity. Well, wait until you hear the people shout when they see Antonio; why, they fairly seem to worship him here in Nimes."

Elise went on eating her lunch, wondering if this Antonio were some military hero, or only a public man, like a mayor. After dinner Madame entertained her with a big music box, which played like a small but ambitious brass band. Madame said that

it cost a thousand francs, and that seemed a good deal to Elise, who did not see a book anywhere except a fashion magazine. There were a dozen mirrors to one picture, and in fact the only pictures seemed to be all photographs of the same man. From his dress, Elise took him to be an actor. Such pictures were common in shop windows in Paris.

The music box clattered—so did Madame, and Elise's head began to ache most cruelly. She was glad when Ninon appeared, saying, "Here is hot water if Mademoiselle wishes; and she needs to sleep before dinner, perhaps." So she escaped to her room, also full of mirrors and plush chairs. Ninon moved softly about, arranging the bed. Then she said, "Mademoiselle has great sorrow, I hear. I also lost the best of fathers not six weeks ago. He is with God, and God is with us in Nimes if we trust him. Is it not so?"

Ninon's face was beautiful in its compassion. Elise suddenly threw both arms around her neck and burst into tears. Ninon petted her as if she had been a child, coaxed her to lie down and left her to a needed sleep.

It was late in the afternoon when Elise awoke and found the room flooded with golden sunset light. She rose up much refreshed, and after putting on a fresher gown and smoothing her hair she seated herself at the open window. Near by was a pretty little park, with a pond on which white swans were sailing round and

round. It was thronged with men and women enjoying the cool of the day. All these women of the middle class seemed to Elise very fine looking, and she remembered then that the women of this part of France were celebrated for their beauty. Suddenly she found herself longing for a sight of old Lizette in her working garb, Lizette with her sallow skin and high cheek bones.

"This will never do," said the homesick girl to herself, and so rising again she busied herself unpacking her little trunk until Ninon called her to dinner.

At dinner Elise saw Antonio; a great handsome boy he seemed to her, and as perfect physically as the antique statues in the Louvre. He had honest brown eyes like an affectionate dog's, and a simple hearty manner that was very friendly. He had been once in Paris, and talked of the streets, parks and home scenes until Elise wished that he was her cousin, or, better still, her brother. Evidently he was her aunt's idol, for when he had gone out after dinner, Madame Girard said, "Antonio is *so pious*, Elise. You cannot imagine a more devout young man. He goes to confession every Saturday night in summer, in order, as he tells me, that he may be ready for death the next day, if need be. The saints preserve him!—but in a profession like his one cannot be *too* pious."

Much bewildered by this strange speech, Elise asked: "Is Antonio to become a priest?" At the

same time she wondered why he should think Sunday a more fatal day than any other.

"A *priest*—my Antonio?" almost shrieked Madame Girard. "A priest with his gifts, his career! Why, he is the best——"

Ninon announced a caller and Elise thankfully escaped again to her room. As she read her Bible, before going to bed, she reflected that it was well to be always ready for death, and it was sweet to know that her dear father needed no earthly confessor to "prepare" him, that night when he "was not," for God took him. He was always trusting in his Saviour, living day by day in his love and presence.

In the long lonely days that now followed, Elise tried not to look backward, but to do the duty that came next and trust God for her future. She lacked no bodily comfort, and Madame in her way was very kind to her; still, sometimes overcome with loneliness, she would ask, "Oh, why was I ever sent here? What good can ever come to me or to any one else from my living in Nimes?"

Madame Girard was a notable housekeeper; she did so much of her own work that Ninon had time to spare. Elise tried to be an agreeable companion for her aunt, but this proved a wearisome occupation, not only to the girl, but in time to the woman, because they had no interests in common and were wholly unlike in natures. Madame never read anything, she had no taste for art or nature. Her religion was

to keep Lent, to eat no meat on Fridays, and to go to mass and to confession. Life meant to her good clothes, good food, and to chatter, chatter all day long about—nothing. It seemed to Elise that her aunt never thought on any subject, and but for Ninon she would have been forlorn. When Madame found that Elise could tell her nothing about the shops or theaters or gay life of Paris, she used often to propose that she and Ninon should "take a walk."

Ninon was the daughter of a well-to-do farmer, who, having had one misfortune after another, died and left his family poor. Ninon, the eldest girl, took service at once in order better to support her mother. In every respect except social position she was really the superior of the mistress by whom she was at present employed.

Elise's coming was a pleasure to Ninon, for from the first, Elise treated her with kindness and consideration. These walks proposed by Madame were eagerly undertaken by both of the young women.

Ninon showed the lovely public gardens and those wonderful old Roman ruins about which she knew little but had wondered much. Elise, better instructed, could tell her that the magnificent *Maison Carre*, or great square building situated in the busiest part of the city, had been there about two thousand years. More interesting still was the great amphitheater built by Antoninus Pius. They wandered into it one afternoon, and Elise told her of the early days of

Christianity, and of the martyrs who were thrown to wild beasts in these places. Ninon, listening intently, said:

"You speak as if all Christians then believed alike. Now you are a Protestant and I am a Catholic. How is that?"

"But we both believe in Christ; we both trust him to save us here and hereafter, do we not?"

"We do," devoutly replied Ninon.

"Then I think we are both Christians, even if we do not think alike."

"Tell me why we think differently."

Elise was puzzled; then, simply as she could, she told of the early Church, of errors that crept in, and how at last divisions arose. Ninon listened with deep earnestness, then she said, "My father was a God-fearing, good man. Before I came to Nimes I thought that all priests were perfectly holy; they are far from it. One told me that my father was suffering torment in purgatory and would never be blessed until I paid for many more masses to be said for him. I paid. Then that priest said that I had not paid for half enough. I found a little book one day, and it said there that God never meant us to *buy* salvation for ourselves or our friends with money and of other sinful men. I believed that. I have not been to confession for a year. I pray every day many times, oh, so many, for my father! Do you not think a prayer of love God might hear sooner than one paid

for to a priest? If I keep my money I do it not in order to save. Instead, I give that money to the poor. But sometimes I fear I am being wicked; then I am unhappy. Will you tell me what you think?"

Sitting there, on the ancient stone seats, Elise told her of salvation by faith, of the Christ who said "Come unto me," not "Go to a priest who stands between me and you." Elise's words fell on rich ground, all ready for the seed. Ninon received the truth with gladness, and, whatever she might call herself thereafter, her heart was right. In her conduct she had long been blameless. She told Elise that there was a Protestant church in Nimes and proposed that they should go there to worship. That was the beginning of many Sundays when the Huguenot girl, and the maid, dressed in the best attire of her province, went where both were strengthened, and when once Ninon said to Elise, "I believe God sent you to Nimes to show me the truth and to make me happy," Elise thought to herself, "Perhaps Ninon did need me," and she herself was happier.

The day after Elise got to Nimes her aunt told Antonio that she had asked if he were to be a priest. He laughed merrily and said, "Promise not to tell her until she sees the whole thing," and his aunt promised. But it was Antonio's photograph that Elise saw on the wall. So one day she asked, "Is Antonio an actor?" Madame said, "Oh, no; that is a costume he has worn sometimes."

The girl had heard of masquerades and asked nothing more. When he was at home he made it very pleasant for her, taking his aunt and Elise on excursions and for long walks. One day they all went to the Pont du Gard, driving through an exquisitely beautiful country. It was indeed "sunny France," soft green hills, great gray rocks, olive, lemon, orange and sycamore trees. In the distance were the Alps. Elise, remembering that Monsieur Levois had said that his sister lived near there, studied every chateau they passed; but when they reached the Pont, or bridge, everything else was forgotten in her delight. There were three magnificent rows of arches, one above the other; no words could tell how grand it was, rising so far above the surrounding landscape. Under it flowed the River Gard, a wide green stream, just as it had rippled along since that time nineteen years before Christ when Agrippa's workmen had built this great bridge, which looked as new as if finished yesterday. Antonio was tireless in showing Elise every best point of view, and only ceased when his aunt protested that she was starving. He led the way to a queer little inn, with a wide, vine covered arbor, where their lunch was served. The omelette was good, but Antonio, like a big boy, could not eat for the fun he had over the dogs, cats, and the poultry that danced attendance on this out-of-door meal. One young dog, meant by nature to be a monster in due time, had then only a funny little body, great

splay feet and a great soft head. He and a saucy kitten were all over Antonio, and Elise thought to herself, "He must be good, he is so kind to animals." Before the day was done she seemed always to have known her "cousin," as he insisted on being called. After lunch Madame Girard stretched her mouth in one great yawn after another, until the inn-keeper, taking a hint, asked her to come indoors for a little rest. Madame quickly accepted, and five seconds later Antonio insisted that they could hear a soft snoring from within; he imposed upon Elise until she discovered that the breathing was from the overgrown puppy, under the table. Ninon had accompanied the party as Madame's maid; she suddenly whispered, "Voila! Mademoiselle?"

"What? Who?" asked Elise.

"The lady, or the 'angel,' as the poor about here call her. No doubt she comes this moment from feeding the hungry or helping the friendless."

Before Elise could ask another question there trotted up to the inn door a little white pony, drawing an old-fashioned, two-wheeled chaise. There within, seated by a coachman in faded livery, was the sweetest little old creature that Elise had ever seen. Her hair was in half tumbled curls, like a child's, only white as snow. There was something childlike, too, in her fluttering hands, her eager soft eyes, and the pleased expression that lighted up her face when she discovered the attractive young people. Still,

there was much dignity in the air with which she put certain questions to the landlady about some crippled child in the neighborhood.

"Yes, Madame, they are indeed needy, that family," replied the landlady. "They tell me that the poor cripple suffers much, and one says also that the poor mother calls down heaven's blessings on you, Madame Levois."

"Madame Levois!" cried Elise, forgetting everybody else. "Are you indeed the sister of our Monsieur Levois in Paris? The friend of my dearest father?"

"O Mademoiselle! and can *you* be my little Huguenot? Why, I saw you, years gone by now, at your father's knee, in your own home! Yes, you are sure Pere Rouelle's Elise."

Then, to the surprise of Ninon and the others, Madame sprang from her carriage, embracing the girl with true French grace and, better still, with real tenderness. They talked of Paris and of mutual friends until Elise's cheeks were pink as the new blossoms on the almond trees behind the arbor. (It was Antonio who thought just then of their lovely color and of the blossoms, while his aunt slept, yes, by this time truly snored.) When the lovely old lady drove away she left a promise to see Elise soon and to be a friend at hand whenever the young girl was lonely. Just before she departed Elise bethought herself and presented Antonio. She called him her

"cousin," in her hurry, and afterward wondered at the surprise on Madame's face; a bewildered look, as if she had seen or heard of Antonio, yet she did not seem to know him when he was presented to her. Antonio was very courteous, and Elise was rather proud of him, thinking everybody must find him very winning in his ways. Elise had discovered also that he had a fair education, having taken prizes at his school in Avignon. Altogether, it was the happiest day Elise had had since her father died.

CHAPTER III.

AN INVITATION.

Madame Levois came to see Elise the next week, also to take quiet note of her surroundings. She was affectionate to Elise and civil to her aunt. Madame Girard was divided between pride and pique at Elise's new friendship. Pride because she knew Madame Levois to be a woman of education and social position; pique because she felt herself no companion for a person of that stamp. Moreover, about this time Madame Girard had what to her was a great annoyance, and it was given to her by her beloved Antonio, who all at once developed a will as strong as his compliance with her wishes before had been dutiful. Elise suspected trouble, because she heard them every day discussing something with much earnest-

ness and sometimes heat. Antonio, too, after these interviews, had a way of seeming silently to bespeak Elise's interest and sympathy. However, all thought of what this might mean was forgotten when one day she was invited to spend a fortnight with Madame Levois.

. . . . . .

It was the last day of Elise's visit at the chateau. Late that afternoon she was to meet her aunt at the little inn near the Pont du Gard, and with her return to Nimes. The old chateau had seemed to the girl the quaintest sweetest place imaginable. It was a long low house with a graveled courtyard and a tall iron fence in front—as ugly a place as possible before one entered. Once inside the change was great; Madame had the taste of a young housekeeper for pretty belongings. She had covered all her worn furniture with dainty chintz; at dusk bright fires crackled in the deep fire-places; by day the long windows were open into her garden. Then floods of sunshine filled her rooms, glittering on the prisms of the crystal candelabra, and made the golden caged canaries wild with a joy set free in song. But it was the garden that Elise loved best. This last morning she was wandering down its winding walks, between stiff clipped cypresses, thinking that nothing could be finer than these flower borders or the great thickets of blossoming shrubs here and there in corners. At the garden's end was a tiny fountain. It trickled

from the vase of a weather beaten Undine whose features had vanished into nothingness. Elise, standing there before the statue, wondered why the thought of going back to Nimes was not more unpleasant than she found it. Here all was so lovely, so refined. Madame Levois, with her softness and her purity, was as unlike Madame Girard as the harmonious furnishings of the faded chateau were unlike the gaudy plush and the heavy gilding of the Nimes *appartement.* Still Elise was not unhappy; she said to herself that perhaps she missed Ninon, with her faithful devotion and her reliance on Elise's superior wisdom. Then there was—well, of course a young person like Antonio in any house made it livelier, and —— She was suddenly startled by the presence of her hostess close at hand. Madame seated herself on a rustic bench, making a place at her side for the girl. The color crept into Elise's cheeks when, as if aware of her thoughts, the old lady said:

"Tell me, child, is this Antonio a Romanist?"

"Yes, Madame."

"And is he a well-disposed intelligent young person?"

"He is indeed; Madame Girard never tires of praising him."

Elise's prompt replies did not go unnoted. Taking up a bit of embroidery, the old lady went on:

"His face puzzles me; it is as if I had seen pictures of him in some shop, as I might of a musician or a

famous painter, but that is impossible. It must be some mere resemblance. And is Antonio much at home?"

"He was not earlier in the spring, when I first came; now he seems to be there most of the time," Elise naively answered. .

For some time the old lady was lost in thought, and that not of a pleasant nature, to judge by the gravity of her kind old face. After a while she said gently:

"Elise, there are things that our modest French girls do not let disturb their minds until their parents have taken counsel and decided for them in certain important matters. You, my dear child, have no parents on earth. You are a Protestant among Romanists. I make no doubt that your aunt is a kind-hearted well-meaning woman, but in some cases I should distrust her judgment—at least where *you* might be concerned. Now please remember, dear, that I am old, that I knew your father—and then pardon me if what I say embarrasses you—you are young and not unattractive, Elise, so naturally your aunt may think of placing you—of arranging a marriage."

"Oh, *never*, Madame!" exclaimed Elise. "I shall, of course, never marry."

"And why not, pray tell?"

"Because, Madame—you forget that I am poor. I have no 'dot,' so I can never marry."

Madame, being French, had not forgotten, but she had argued that Elise's aunt was a well-to-do woman and had no daughter of her own, so she replied:

"True, my child, you are not rich, but there are situations in life when poverty is a relative term. Then I conclude that your aunt has never spoken to you of marriage?"

"Never, Madame Levois."

"I am glad, *very* glad to know it. Her friends are all Romanists; of course they may be amiable and even conscientious people, but we know that they have departed from the faith once given to the apostles. Never consent to marry a Romanist, Elise. Your father, if alive, would not approve."

There was no reason after that why the sunlight should seem less bright nor why the battered old Undine should suggest tears to a maiden full of life, yet Elise was vaguely depressed. Madame embroidered a tiny rose before she asked:

"May I inquire if Antonio is betrothed?"

"I do not know," replied Elise. Then there returned to her a speech of her aunt's, which, at the time, she had thought of no significance, but perhaps Madame had made it intentionally. Speaking out her thought, Elise added, "I think that he is not betrothed, for I recall now my aunt spoke of a rich young lady in Arles whom she hoped Antonio would marry. She said, I remember, that he ought not to think of a young girl who had not a good 'dot.'"

In the present moment Madame Levois chose to be quite French in her ideas, although she had a secret fund of pure sentiment in her heart. She responded:

"Madame Girard *was right.* Antonio should marry some young Romanist, if possible one of wealth."

After that they talked of various things and Elise grew pensive. She said that she dreaded leaving the chateau, and she wished that it was indeed her home.

About four o'clock that afternoon a peasant girl came to tell Elise that her aunt awaited her at the Pont du Gard. Elise bade Madame Levois a most affectionate adieu and prepared to go back with the girl. Madame detained her one moment at the last, in her own pretty salon, always faintly perfumed with dried rose leaves.

"Elise," she said, "remember this: If ever anything makes it hard or unpleasant for you to live at Nimes, my home and my heart are wide open to you. Come right here, without even waiting to announce your coming, and stay here so long as I stay."

Elise thanked her warmly, and then followed the girl across the fields, which were green and glowing in the beauty of early summer. She found her aunt waiting for her in a shaded spot between the inn and the bridge, and Elise's first question, after a greeting, was, "Are you ill, Aunt Toinette?"

"No, not really ill. I have had much to trouble me, one way and another. Sit here a while; the horse is not quite ready."

Madame Girard had indeed passed a troublous fortnight. No sooner had Elise gone than Antonio formally asked of his aunt Elise's hand in marriage. When told that she had no "dot," he, to his aunt's amazement and wrath, said that he would "take her without."

"But she is a Protestant—a heretic."

"Yes, truly, but a dear little thing, and no doubt with persuasion would soon come into the true fold."

Madame Girard had no spite against Elise, but she had lofty ambition for her Antonio, and so loud were her protestations. Who but Antonio was to be her heir? If he displeased her she would not leave him a sou. He sweetly told her that they would not quarrel over that, for he "could make francs by the thousand for himself."

He was told to remember the rich men's daughters that he might marry. He replied that he preferred to think of the pretty little Huguenot maid whom he wanted to marry. So the controversy raged, finally to subside in sullen acquiescence on the aunt's part, in joyful assurance of future happiness on Antonio's. At last he brought his poor aunt to promise that she would "arrange" with Elise this afternoon at the Pont du Gard. Poor Madame! Poor Elise! Poor Antonio!

Now Aunt Toinette, as she sat there with her niece, did her appointed task honestly, and even managed to conceal her chagrin at the downfall of all her hopes for Antonio. She told Elise of his choice and his wishes—nothing of his love; that was not to the purpose in early stages of affairs like this. All the same, the young girl, listening with soft averted eyes, knew that Antonio was drawn to her and she to Antonio.

In general an arrangement between two parties presupposes that each has something to say, but when Madame Girard stopped talking she thought the matter decided for all time, although Elise had not once opened her lips. What was her amazement when Elise said, faintly but plainly:

"I cannot marry him, aunt; you must tell him so."

"*No?* Not marry *Antonio?*"

"Oh, do not be angry, Aunt Toinette; but I fear that—why, I am poor; I have no 'dot.'"

"True. We spoke of that; but that can be got over. I must charge myself with your trousseau."

"Not only poverty, aunt—I am a Protestant, and my fa——"

"The question is not of your father nor of his consent," coarsely broke in Madame. "He has nothing to do with to-day and its doings."

"His teachings have to do with all my days," replied Elise, warmly.

"That may be, in a way, but is not my Antonio *good* enough for a chit of a heretic? Why, you ought

to go down on your knees and thank the saints for sending you such a husband."

"Oh, *don't* be angry, Aunt Toinette; but I fear that it can never be, for——"

"Oh, you *fear?*" asked her aunt, with a meaning sneer.

To Elise the sharp question seemed less than delicate. She was covered with quick confusion. "She wants to marry him," was Madame Girard's secret comment, and once satisfied of that, she ended the conversation with an air of tolerance, half soothing, half provoking, to Elise, saying:

"There, now; think a little before you are so free with your 'can nots' and your 'must nots.' Come, see the *garçon* has led out our horse. We shall be late into Nimes, I fear."

All the way home the talk was of indifferent matters, but Elise's thoughts were a whirl of fear, doubt, hope, certainty—under all, pleasantly stirring, a faint joy that all was as it was.

. . . . . .

How grandly strong we mortals are before temptation that comes—in imagination! How wavering, when the fancied becomes the real! That day by the fountain Elise thought marriage with a Romanist an impossibility for her. How was it the next day in her aunt's salon when (that lady in sight but not in hearing) Antonio told Elise that he loved her, told it in the soft Provençal tongue that for centuries has been

the language of love? She read truth in his earnest eyes. Her reason assured her that only for unfeigned love would he choose a portionless orphan. But the test came when they talked of their different faiths. Antonio should have been a lawyer, so well could he plead; in fact, he had studied at one time to become one. What if they differed in a few forms, he pleaded, were they not one in the true spirit of devotion? Did they not both seek to love God and their neighbors? Henry of Navarre once said that a crown was worth a mass—surely a man's love was worth as much; but he would not even ask the mass; he would leave Elise free to worship with what forms or lack of them she chose. Antonio erred when he quoted the great Huguenot Prince, whom Elise had been taught to regard as an apostate. She thought of the long line of her forefathers who had kept the faith through trials and sore temptations. She reflected that their blood had reddened the streets of Paris that awful eve of St. Bartholomew. Antonio guessed the thread of her thoughts, and with his great southern eyes full of hope and ardor he begged her to reflect that the world had been growing better. Once Romanists and Protestants did seek one another's destruction, but peace and love reigned now. Why, right here in Nimes he could show her friends, lovers, old married couples of different faiths living in beautiful harmony.

But Elise would not agree that day to a betrothal. She promised to think, not for one day, but for a fort-

night, then she would tell her final decision. The days that followed were not easy. Like all shallow natures, Madame Girard was swayed, not by reason, but by her affections or prejudices. No sooner did she realize that Antonio must have his will, or suffer, than her love for him made his will become her own. Now by every device she tried to influence Elise to become his wife. She tested her authority, hinting that she stood in place of the girl's parents. She stooped to bribery, telling Elise that she was virtually a pauper, but that before she wedded Antonio one-half of Madame's property would be settled on her. Antonio was in time to have the rest. She even tried to argue on religion, but at that she failed most ludicrously, having no idea what was believed by the Church of England, to which Elise had now attached herself. There were days when Elise longed to hold out her hand to Antonio for the beautiful betrothal ring that he carried in his breast pocket. There were nights when she seemed to hear her father quote Madame Levois: "*Tenez-vous done fermes dans la liberte, a l'egard de laquelle Christ nous a affranchis.*"

At last there came to her, one night, an illumination as suddenly as if she had seen a handwriting on the wall. Once, when a child, she had longed to pluck some peaches ripening on a side wall. It was a forbidden thing, but every hour she went to admire their luscious beauty. At last she took the finest of

all—and was wretched. Hurrying to her father, she confessed, dwelling on the time she had resisted. He forgave her lovingly, but said, "My child, let this teach you never to *stay* trying to resist any temptation from which you *can best escape by flight.*"

Elise resolved at once to tell Madame Levois all, to seek her protection for a time, if it seemed best, or until Antonio ceased to try to win her. Alas, poor human nature! The thought that he would cease made Elise, for a moment, averse to the very flight that she meditated.

While the girl was in this state of uncertainty Antonio and Madame Girard planned a grand *coup d'etat*, showing (had they only known it) entire ignorance of all Elise's sentiments and religious convictions. They forgot, too, the difference between the people of the north and the south of the same country. If Elise had not been so preoccupied that she spent much time indoors, she might have noticed a new excitement in the streets and shops, would have read certain great posters everywhere conspicuous on the walls; but she heeded nothing of the sort. Her fortnight was almost ended when there came a most beautiful Sunday in May, and Aunt Toinette requested Elise to go with her in the afternoon to meet some friends. Elise consented, and at an early hour they set forth. In southern France Sunday is, more or less, a gala day. Therefore it did not surprise Elise that the streets were swarming with people, nor did

she notice that all were pressing one way—not at least until they grew near the great Coliseum, in whose lonely solemn enclosure she and Ninon had spent many half hours. Now all about it were gay banners, booths for cool drinks, fruit sellers, peddlers of lottery tickets. All was noise and confusion.

"It will be more orderly inside," said her aunt, and even then Elise's only thought was that her aunt's friends might have arranged a meeting in the quiet, cool old place, where fêtes and picnics were sometimes held. At any rate they must get somewhere, so dense was now the rush of people on foot and the oncome of prancing steeds before fine carriages; flower decorated horses, whose drivers cracked their whips and loudly shouted for right of way. Madame Girard suddenly pushed the girl through the passage way under the great wall, from which they emerged into such a scene! Around the great ring, rising tier above tier, on the stone seats, were at least seven thousand people—men, women, children. Thousands of gay fans fluttered. A burst of music greeted them as they entered.

"What is it? Where are we?" cried Elise, amazed; but her voice was lost in the general uproar. People behind urged her on; her aunt impelled her steadily toward a place that she evidently meant to occupy, and not until she had pushed Elise into a seat did she even speak to her, then she blandly explained:

"Antonio wants you to see one of our entertain-

ments. We have them all summer every Sunday, but this is to be one of the very best."

"Oh, take me out, Aunt Toinette! My father never approved of these Sunday horse races," remonstrated the distressed girl. "Please let me go home!"

"Impossible!" said her aunt, firmly. "I could *never* go against the tide of people moving this way from outside."

"But I—I am not stout. I could do it."

"Alone and you a young girl? Are you crazy? You would invite insults."

Elise knew this was true. Ninon, in her rustic garb, might go about the streets unmolested as a servant, but on this day a well dressed young lady could not.

"You should have told me," she expostulated in an injured tone, which greatly incensed Madame Girard, who, to do her justice, had no idea how shocked rather than amused this niece of hers was sure to be by the scenes which were to follow. For this reason she sternly answered:

"We are here now, and you cannot possibly go until the thing is, at least, half over. You need not look, if you do not want to—the music at least will not hurt you."

Elise was powerless. She knew that she had not meant to come to this horse race, as she supposed it. She leaned back in her seat and was silent. She was young and French moreover; so, being here, the

music, the gay people, the sunlight, the vivid colors and all the novelty could not but interest. Suddenly, loud above the clatter of tongues, came a blare of trumpets and a wild rush of horsemen into the great ring. There were riders with gorgeous jackets and long lances; then swordsmen on foot, all shining with gold and silver embroidery on garments of scarlet, blue, green or yellow. One man only, he who led the gay troupe, was dressed in black and carried a great key.

"He unlocks the bull gate," said a man to his little boy who sat behind Elise, and in that instant she knew that she had come to a bull fight. She had but just understood the fact when a breathless silence fell on the vast assembly, and all eyes were turned toward a man sitting in a conspicuous place over a gate. He waved a white handkerchief. There was a second trumpet blare, and into the arena rushed a black bull.

"Oh, Aunt Toinette, let me go! I cannot see the horses gored and perhaps the men killed."

"Nonsense, Elise! these bulls are not of the fiercest kind; the horses are of little worth, and the men will take care of themselves Our fights are not cruel like the Spaniards'; they are more trials of agility and great skill."

It was at first like a nightmare to the innocent girl, then she was equally interested and repelled; in spite of herself she had to look at intervals, when the enthusiasm carried away all the spectators around her,

making them shout or applaud in wild abandon of pleasure or disapproval of the maneuvers. At times it seemed as if she was merely looking at a picture. But we have no intention of describing a bull fight in detail. The men seemed to escape unhurt, while the horses were killed or disabled. The people yelled and shouted when one horseman drove his lance into the bull's neck and the maddened brute gored to death the horse of another rider. So it went. Elise now looked, now hid her face. Suddenly all interest seemed to center in one swordsman, evidently the people's favorite. At his exploits the excitement reached its height, and the applauding multitude yelled "Antonio! Antonio!"

"See! See! Elise!" cried her aunt, half rising in her seat, "is not Antonio grand? What grace! what lightness!"

Elise saw him advancing with a quick proud step, his garments glittering with gold, a scarlet cloak held gracefully over one arm. Holding up his sword to the president of the game, he said in a loud musical voice: "I go to slay this bull for the honor of the people of Nimes and for Your Excellency."

Then, flinging his hat from his head, he walked lightly toward the now half mad bull, taunting, attracting, baffling it. The people stood in their places. They were at the utmost pitch of excitement, but restrained their wild uproar until Antonio, after what seemed to Elise horrible perils, had got the

beast in position; then lifting his sword he, with a lightning-like spring, plunged it to the hilt near the top of the bull's spine. The great beast recoiled, reeled, made as if he would charge again—then fell heavily on the sand, the blood gushing from his wound, but life fast going with it.

Elise seemed in a dreadful dream. She hardly knew how they reached the entrance, or even the way they took home. She heard people congratulating her aunt; she knew that Antonio's name seemed to be on every man's lips. She heard her aunt telling her that "No toreador in all France was the equal of Antonio in skill or grace; that he had made at least a thousand francs that afternoon." Elise listened; yet the jubilant people, the crowded streets, were all most unreal. Strangest of all was the thought of Antonio as a bull fighter. He—her lover, and she the daughter of a pious Huguenot preacher! When she was at last at home, she hastened to her quiet room, locked the door and fell on her couch, faint with excess of emotion—with, as yet, a half comprehended sense of all that she had seen, felt and undergone that Sunday afternoon. Before she could take any resolution for the future she fell asleep from utter exhaustion.

CHAPTER IV.

AN OLD FRIEND.

The next morning, when the sun was just up and only the birds were stirring, Elise surprised Ninon by appearing in her little chamber and begging her to go with her. When Ninon asked where, Elise told her that she wished to visit Madame Levois, and for certain reasons to get to her very early in the day. She did not explain that she had left a letter for her aunt nor that she wished to avoid Antonio.

Madame Girard was a late riser; Ninon would have ample time to see Elise so far on her way that she could safely go the rest of her way alone, and then return to her own duties. Madame Levois was just sipping her morning coffee when Elise appeared in her sunny little dining-room, and the welcome that she gave her was as warm as it was sincere. Before noon it seemed to Elise almost as if she had come home to her own mother. Madame gave her a pretty room for which she was to care herself. She assigned to her light tasks, like feeding the canaries, filling the vases with garden flowers and dusting the old carved furniture. Madame heard all about Antonio's state of mind and then guessed as much of the girl's own as Elise left untold. Her opinion was soon given: "Now, Elise, your way is plain, and mine as well; your father would not wish you to stay in Nimes.

You are my charge henceforth. When I die my brother will see that you are not left unprotected. Your aunt will no doubt be angry, and we must be patient with her, for, from her point of view, she may have some reason to resent your running away."

Resent it Madame Girard most certainly did. She arrived that very afternoon with her temper at boiling point, and proceeded to give free vent to her emotions. Elise was silent, having said in her letter all that she had to say. Madame Levois, when she assumed her air of dignified serenity, was not a person at whom one could storm without feeling at a disadvantage. From scolding like a virago, Madame suddenly fell to accusing Elise of gross ingratitude, and then departed with the sullen assurance that she had done with her niece from thenceforth and forever.

Then came a week of quiet country life, and Elise was half persuaded that she was as happy as ever, or at least she would be if she could think of Antonio only as a toreador and a bigoted Romanist, never as he was when he was pleading with her. One afternoon she was in the garden, reading to Madame Levois, when the maid, opening the long window of the salon, let out Antonio. Madame Levois at once prepared to be sternness itself, to refuse him any interview with Elise, to banish him almost immediately. But she simply could not. He was gentle, courteous, but determined to say that which he came to say. He gave Elise one long persuasive look which made her

tremble even as she braced herself for resistance. Then, at Madame's request, he retired with her to the salon, leaving Elise by the watery Undine, with whom she began to feel a kind of lachrymose sympathy. A half-hour later they came again into the garden, and, in Madame's presence, but wholly undismayed by her, Antonio renewed his love-suit. Elise was moved, but she did not waver. Then came a proposal for which Madame was unprepared; a concession which she feared would overbalance all Elise's scruples. Antonio promised to go with Elise to all her Protestant services, to study faithfully all her doctrines which differed from those of the Romanists, and to open his heart to conviction of their truth.

"No, Antonio, I cannot give you my promise in exchange for such a promise from you. You would not really be moved by any love of the truth, but only by a wish to win me, and, missing the truth, you would become a hypocrite, perhaps."

Antonio answered this with much tact, and then, calling Madame Levois to witness, he offered to give up forever the career of a bull-fighter—never again to attend a bull-fight, if Elise would marry him. He protested that he would be glad to thus conform to all her rules of life and conduct, for he was persuaded that they must be good and noble because they had made her what she was.

"No, no, Antonio! I *must* not say yes. You would mean at first to do all this, but doing it not from

real principle, but from sentiment, you would surely find the new ways irksome, and you might—no—no! Adieu, Antonio!" And springing to her feet, Elise fled, remembering her father's injunction. The young man talked long with the old lady, who, in spite of her disapproval, felt more and more attracted by and kindly toward him. However, at last Antonio was obliged to go away disconsolate, having failed utterly to effect his purpose.

Weeks passed; Elise never heard from Nimes. The papers told of Sunday bull-fights (indeed they were always on that day), and Antonio was always the hero of the fight. The summer had almost gone; there came a Sunday when at sunset Madame Levois and Elise were together in the salon, Madame playing sacred melodies on her old-fashioned piano and Elise singing now and then. Suddenly they were startled by the sound of a carriage driven rapidly, then Elise heard Ninon's voice asking for her. Running to the door she met the excited girl, who explained to her that Antonio was fatally wounded—hurt that day in the bull-fight. He begged to see Elise before he died. Ninon had come by rail to Remoulins, thence to Madame Levois' by carriage; if the Madame and Elise would return with her they might yet get to Nimes while the poor fellow was alive. They wasted no time; Ninon had come by a luggage train, but a regular passenger train was due at Remoulins in a quarter of an hour. They caught it just by a moment. When

the last ray of daylight was fading they came into the city, into Nimes, so hot and dusty, so terrible to Elise, who was all the time picturing to herself the scenes of the afternoon—the gayety, the music, the awful accident—Antonio borne out of the dreadful arena wounded, and *now he was dying*. Next Sunday some other favorite would take his place, and all would go on as merrily as ever.

They found Madame Girard half shrieking with grief, for in a crisis she had never any self-control. The house was filled with the friendly and the curious, all watching the coming and going of doctors. A priest had just administered extreme unction and Antonio suffered less. When that last rite of his church was finished Elise and the old lady entered the room where Antonio was stretched on his bed, pale and looking half lifeless already. His beautiful dark eyes lighted up with joy at the sight of Elise, now weeping softly. He spoke feebly but plainly:

"You said to me in the garden 'Adieu.' Now I must say it to you. I leave you my love for a blessing. When it is only a memory you can keep it without wrong. I was never angry, Elise. You meant to do right—and I think—that—you loved me."

Elise bowed her head; she could not speak.

"If you did, kiss me this once."

She bent and kissed him; then the doctor whispered to Madame Levois:

"Take her away now, for he must be kept very quiet."

Elise murmured a word or two in his ear, and then went away to hide in a corner of the gaudy salon where her aunt was hysterically telling all the dreadful details to a group of friends who joined her at intervals in loud bewailing. In the morning Madame and Elise departed, having learned that Antonio was still alive, and that one physician declared that death was not inevitable.

. . . . . .

For a week Antonio hovered on the brink of the grave, then the papers reported a partial paralysis of his limbs, but an improvement in his general condition. It was next day said that he would live, but be a cripple. And then Elise learned that her aunt had gone with him to some far distant springs where there was a great sanitarium, that Madame had sold her share in the old shop and would live no more in Nimes, where her dear nephew's life had been so wrecked. After that, Elise heard no more, and knew that one chapter of her life had ended.

. . . . . .

It was Elise Rouelle's twenty-third birthday, five years from the spring when she turned her face toward the south and went out into an unknown world. Now again she was in Paris, and again in a home of her own—a better home than her first one had been, so far as externals were concerned. For

three years Elise had live with Madame Levois: a tranquil life, filled with simple tasks and pleasures, with visits to the poor, with few changes and no great excitements. Then, one fair morning, Madame, sitting among her flowers and singing birds, leaned back in her tall old chair, and, without suffering, passed from earth to the home above.

Her brother came at once and shared with Elise the last sad labor of looking after Madame's simple arrangements for her poor pensioners; then they removed such keepsakes as she had given to Elise and left the sunny old chateau to strangers.

Monsieur had before this made it evident that he needed Elise in Paris. He was getting old, he wished to adopt her legally as his daughter, and longed to see her at the head of his lonely house. He sent to Rouen for old Lizette to return as Elise's servant again, and the faithful maid was delighted to come back. For two years now Elise had been in Paris. Monsieur Levois had grown old, but in one respect was much improved. Elise, with tactful flattery, had beguiled him out of his red wig into a suitable gray one—and much more venerable and elegant did the old barrister look. Elise herself was somewhat changed, for her beauty had heightened with maturity. The frail girl had become the lovely woman. In spite of her former poverty, Elise had been sought in marriage more than once; but no one had ever pleased her since that sad night when Antonio had bidden her farewell. She

had never heard from him again, and half believed a report that he had died in Carlsbad.

Spring is always beautiful in Paris, when all the streets are full of life and color. Elise loved to be out in the sunshine, and, as old Lizette was not very nimble, it often happened that Elise did her out-of-doors duties for her. In fact, as the mistress of a household she allowed herself more liberty than formerly, and had almost ceased to think of herself as a *young* person. Lizette called her, even at twenty-three, an "old maid." Surely, "eighteen was the time to marry, if at all." This bright May-day Elise had lingered long in the flower market of the Madeleine, which was like a great garden of fragrance and bloom. She was buying bunches of roses—great creamy ones, soft pink ones—almost the tint of her own cheeks that morning. She was turning to go, when two men stepped from an omnibus, halting near. One was Monsieur. Instantly discovering Elise, he exclaimed, "*You*, Elise! I have here a friend, whom I have just invited to dine with us. Monsieur, let me introduce you to my daughter."

"Antonio!" gasped Elise—for Antonio it was, paler, thinner, limping slightly, even with a cane. But there was no mistaking his suddenly illumined eyes, the clear cut face, firmer and more grave than of old.

"*Your daughter!* Why, it is *Elise!*"

"You know her! How is this?" cried the surprised old man, who for months had known and liked

the young barrister, without a thought of his knowing Madame Girard or of his having lived in Nimes. In a moment or so all seemed quite simple to Monsieur who had not known all the reasons why Elise had left Nimes and her aunt. He supposed that it had been something about their religious beliefs.

"Why, this is delightful!" he exclaimed. "You are almost relatives, are you not?"—and so he chattered amiably on, regardless of the fact that Elise was dropping roses and Antonio was beaming on her as if they were symbolical blossoms being strewn in his future life-path. Neither of them said much, but Antonio told her that he had been to the chateau only to find strangers in possession, who could tell him nothing of her. He left no doubt about his accepting the invitation to dinner, and then he reluctantly followed Monsieur to the Palais de Justice, where both of them had some business affairs.

Monsieur Levois came home early that day, and when questioned, replied that he had known Antonio well for several months, and had heard everything good of him from mutual friends. He was a rising young barrister. He added that he had been told that Antonio was a converted Romanist who had hesitated between the Church and his present profession, but decided he was better fitted for the bar.

Lizette concocted a dainty dinner, but grumbled much at various things. Elise forgot to order a certain sort of cakes. Elise nearly spoiled the pudding

with an unheard of flavoring. Lizette found her much like a heedless child and was not afraid to say so—whereat Elise looked positively happy. Later she again annoyed Lizette by refusing to do honor to "Monsieur's guest" by donning a fine new dinner dress, and persisted in wearing a plain white one, which lost its plainness when once on the really radiant girl.

Good old Monsieur, reflecting that, "after all, the young people were almost strangers," and Elise seemed shy, did all the talking at the table, or almost all; but Antonio had not lost the use of those remarkable eyes, and knew how to be eloquent in two languages—or in one, if silent in the other. He did not once refer to the past until it was near the time for a guest to go; then, leaning over a book, he said to Elise, "We agree now in *faith.* You find me in a *profession* that you cannot condemn. I must never let myself see you much more, if you are to go on saying, 'No, no.' May I not stay to-night long enough to tell Monsieur Levois the whole story? Or did you only come to me because I was dying and you were sorry?—Was it *only pity*, Elise?"

When she did not answer, but blushed most bewitchingly, Antonio boldly announced his intention to stay *very late*, if need be, with her adopted father. Just then that innocent old gentleman asked Elise to fetch him a book, for which she went, but did not return.

Antonio must have improved the time to good purpose, for he soon made headway with Monsieur,

although the old lawyer was as well read in human nature as he was in legal documents. He found no good reason to discourage Antonio's hopes. Instead he recalled Elise, and left the whole matter with her.

She bestowed her first attention to the older man, but let Antonio guess her mind when she roguishly asked, "What will my father Levois do without me? He has pretended that he needed me in the past."

Antonio promptly argued that Monsieur had not to lose a daughter, but also to adopt a son who promised affection and dutiful conduct. He himself had now no near kin. Madame Girard had died, leaving him a comfortable fortune. The young lawyer must have won his case, for the next day Elise informed Lizette that she "should not be an old maid"; she was to be married by midsummer.

The old woman said, "Ah! well, it is better late than never"—a sentiment of which Antonio approved most devoutly.

A MAN OF MARKEN.

Dirk Huysum, fisherman of the island of Marken, was going to Rotterdam. Gasper Wolfovert, the "richest" man of the little place, was to send him on business. It was a journey that, taken slowly, might consume a day, although tourists it in much less time. Talk of Dirk's journey was in everybody's mouth, for almost all the people on the island are related and few ever leave it—only the fishermen who have to go, but they get back as soon as ever they can. They pity people who live outside their foggy little island, where life is at its simplest, yet where paupers and criminals are unknown. Why should anybody be poor when the sea is full of fish? Why do wrong when in every home is a well-read Bible telling them of God and of his law and his love?

Dirk had a cabin close to the cabin of his widowed mother, and, until a month before, he had had a bright-faced, yellow-haired wife, whom he loved with all his honest heart, even though, to one born away from Marken, he did seem a very stolid Dutch peasant. But one May evening, when the late setting sun had

covered the sea and the dingy little island with a great flood of golden light, Dirk's wife had slipped away to heaven, leaving him with a little blue-eyed boy only three years old. In his silent way, Dirk grieved so much that his mother and sister did not know how to comfort him, they being slow of speech and not given to talking of what they felt. They rightly guessed that it was with the thought of diverting Dirk's mind that Gasper Wolfovert was sending him to Rotterdam, that city which seemed to them so big, noisy and altogether tremendous, a place. The Sunday before he went the pastor of the queer little church prayed for him; and when, the next day, he hugged little Pieter, his son, it seemed to the mother and sister as if Dirk were going a long way off—oh, if anyone had dreamed how far away! Dirk was one of the best fishermen in Marken, and a sensible, honest, truthful fellow, if he was as ignorant as a child of the world outside the island, and unable to see a joke under a week after it was made, at the least. He took a boat by the Zuyder Zee, then a train from Amsterdam, and as it was his first experience of traveling by steam, he was greatly interested and even excited by the time he got to Rotterdam.

About the middle of the afternoon he was able to attend to the business on which he came; then, being hungry, he went to an eating house which he had noticed on the wharf. There he answered civilly a number of questions asked him by a set of frolicsome

sailors who were eating and also drinking. Now these fellows no sooner detected Dirk's simplicity than they resolved to have some fun out of him. They kept him with them for a stroll about the city, and he good-naturedly let them make him the butt of many rough practical jokes, for he did not suspect them of any malice. Perhaps they meant none and did not even then see how ignorant he was; but, at any rate, when it came time to seek a night's lodging, they told him that they belonged to a big steamer which was to start that night for Amsterdam, and that they could give him a bunk in the sailors' quarters. He would have a good night's rest, they said, and save the cost of a ticket by rail as well as of a bed on land.

Never doubting their good will, Dirk followed them to a big steamer, where they had some more fun with other sailors; and then Dirk stretched himself on a bunk pointed out to him, and, wearied by his unusual experiences, fell so soundly asleep that he knew nothing more for hours. At daylight he was awakened by a rough blow, and he soon made a dreadful discovery—the sailors had got him on an ocean steamer bound for New York and then left him to his fate. The boat did not belong to a Dutch line and the few sailors who understood anything of his story laughed at him. Everyone believed him to be a "stowaway" trying to steal his passage to the United States. If Dirk had not been strong, and, after the first horror and bewilderment, willing to work, his life would have

been most unendurable in the days that followed. But he was used to rough toil, and now, in return for his food and passage, he was most unmercifully worked by way of payment. Everybody set him tasks, from the officers down to the meanest sailors; but he cared nothing for that. He was even glad of it, for he felt as if he should go crazy when he had time to think—to be homesick—to fancy his little Pieter crying at the cabin window because father did not come, and the wondering grief of his mother and sister. He had, in Dutch paper money, several hundred gulden belonging to Wolfovert—what would the Marken people think he had done with that?

At last, the rest of the crew, finding Dirk so sober, so dull, and never profane or quarrelsome, came to consider him almost a fool and to treat him as one. More than once the poor fellow—especially at sunset, when the beauty of the sea recalled that hour when Kathe, his wife, had died—was tempted to jump overboard. But the teachings of the old pastor in the home church, or the Bible lessons of his youth, held him back, and he betook himself to prayer and prayed as he had never prayed before in all his life.

Toward the end of the voyage his courage began to revive. He understood that it would be possible to work his way home and by the end of the month he might return. He even began to feel a faint interest in the fact that he should see America, about which he had very hazy ideas, for Marken people are satis-

fied that their island is the best place in the world—poor, little, watersoaked spot that it is, without animals or trees, and with nothing there but plain people and fish.

One night when the boat was nearly across, there came a wild storm and all hands were on deck busy with their various duties. Dirk tried to help, to the best of his ability, but he was always clumsy and never quick to understand new work, so it happened that, in the confusion and darkness, he was struck by a heavy beam and knocked violently down, so that he fell on his head. He was a little out of the way and, had he been seen, nobody could then have stopped to attend to him. When daylight came, and with it better weather, he was found to be seriously hurt.

The surgeon did what he could for him, but when he was not in a stupor he was delirious. On the boat's arrival in port he was sent to the hospital. In a few weeks Dirk was well in body, but he did not seem to have mind enough left to work with any continuity of thought or attention and he had lost all memory of the past. After a time he drifted into the lunatic asylum, and there for the next two years, Dirk wandered about, moaning for something, he knew not what; most troubled if by chance a little child with soft, fair hair ever came where he could see it. He was never ugly; and sometimes, when standing by a window he saw the sunset light on the water below,

he would try to pray with bowed head, but he had forgotten how; then, stretching his hands out toward the west, he would call, "Kathe! Pieter!" and no one knew that he wanted his wife and child. When asked who he meant, he would only shake his head in a mournful, puzzled way.

When Dirk left Marken for Rotterdam he had said that he might possibly be gone two nights. When a week passed and he did not return everybody wondered; and a few days later his mother and his sister, Christina, began to be greatly distressed. A letter sent to Rotterdam by Gasper Wolfovert elicited the fact that Dirk had attended to the business, received several hundred gulden, and declared that he should go home the next day. Sometimes when Marken men went out to sea in fishing boats they never returned. Perhaps their bodies would be washed ashore; then the stranger people who found them took from their shirt collars the gold or silver buttons worn there since childhood—not for plunder, but that according to the sad old custom the trinkets might defray the cost of a Christian burial for the unknown. When fond mothers first decorated their chubby little Dutchmen with these buttons they realized that it was for life and perhaps for death. But Dirk had gone into no peril; no steamboat or train accident had occurred. Still there are always evil thinkers everywhere. One day Marget, Dirk's mother, caught Karl Schotel

just as he gave a suspicious shake of his head and remarked: "Dirk had a lot of money in his keeping, I understand—more than he ever handled in his life before."

Dirk's mother's grief was great; but her pride and her righteous wrath were even greater. To abscond with trust money was a deed so horrible, so utterly unheard of in that humble woman's experience or observation, that she knew no son of hers could ever have so much as dreamed of anything so wicked. But where was Dirk? Day after day passed. Little Pieter ceased to pull on his little wooden shoes at night, that he might trot through the mud and meet "father," and Dirk's twin sister, Christina, for the first time realized the strength of a mother's love. A brawny Dutch fishwife was that mother, with the muscle of a man and something of a man's self-control, but no delicate lady ever carried a sorer heart over the loss of an only son. True, she did not mourn for him in any fine-lady way. She did harder, dirtier work than ever, as if she longed for the weariness that prevents thought. At the same time, she neglected what had formerly been her pride, the adornment and scrubbing of her little cabin. When a stray tourist, or an artist in search of the picturesque, came strolling up from the boat landing she would snatch up a bucket and have some errand calling her away. Once she would have welcomed strangers, would have displayed with innocent pride

her beautiful old sideboard that seemed too fine for such a simple home. She might even, if the callers pleased her, have opened the doors to show them the closet-bed, only used for great occasions—yes, and the wee shelf above, where the newborn baby nestled to receive his first calls, where her Dirk had cuddled twenty-five years before. It was Christina who now met the strangers, and who listlessly showed their brass candlesticks, polished like gold, and the great green fish dish, with the queer little side places for butter and salt, and told them, when they went into raptures, that nothing was for sale, all were heirlooms. The visitors could not know that now there was always a lump in Christina's throat; but there was, even if she was good-natured enough to show the queer silk-embroidered bridal bodices which every Marken bride receives from her mother and hands down to her daughter and her bridesmaid. When she put them away the tears would drop on the faded roses; for it seemed such a little time ago that Kathe had stood by Dirk, wearing her mother's bodice, and when Christina laid it away after Kathe died, Dirk had said that it would not be worn again until little Pieter took a wife; for he had no daughter.

Oh, where was the big-hearted brother who never before had been three days away from his island home! Christina grieved without hate or bitterness; but her mother had a fierce battle with herself before she could cease from feeling revengeful toward Karl

Schotel, who kept always before the mind of the people the fact that the money belonged to Gasper Wolfovert. But one night—it was the night before communion and about a year from the date of Dirk's disappearance—Dirk's mother began to forgive—prayed for grace to forgive Karl. It was a wonderful night in June. There was no time when there was real darkness over those northern waters, but the sky was a faint blue, with snowy cloud-drifts pink-tinted after midnight and the sea was like a vast shimmering opal. However, it was not the beauty of nature that kept Dirk's mother awake. It was, at first, fierce anger at the thought of Karl, fat, prosperous in his fishing, with his large family all well and happy. He was stingy, small-minded, and as near dishonest as a Marken man ever seemed able to be. Such a man as he to suspect her son, over whose body the sea waves had perhaps been rolling these long months! Then she remembered that to-morrow she was to go to the Lord's table, hating Karl, secretly wishing that disaster might come to him or to his.

The air in the cabin seemed stifling; she went out of doors and sat down in the short coarse grass. There was not a sound from the sky, the land, or even the sea, but God's presence was there in the hush, and, at last, this woman, crude, common, but honest, felt his Spirit in her heart, even as a finer nature might have felt him in the wondrous beauty of the night. She prayed for herself, to be delivered from

sin, from hate, even to be made glad that her enemy was prospered and not in trouble. Her prayer was answered. That day, in the little church, she was at peace, and yet there came to her, for no reason, a belief, that never again left her, that Dirk was not dead. Over and over she said to herself: "He is alive somewhere, but why does he not come? I must never cease praying for him—body and soul."

Before another Sunday she wondered how she could have felt so hard toward Karl Schotel, for his youngest boy came near dying with croup, and Marget, the best nurse in Marken, worked over the little one without a moment's respite, until he was out of danger. When he breathed softly and slept sweetly, Karl wrung her rough hand with the grip of a giant and he stammered sincerely: "God grant your own boy come again, Marget, for it is a good heart you have and a kind to a neighbor in trouble."

One day soon after that Marget said to Christina, "When the next tourist, who looks at our things, asks if we have 'any old silver to sell'" (a question that always angered Marget) "you may offer the two large spoons, and tell them they could not buy another pair on the island for love nor money."

"Those spoons!" gasped Christina; "the two that you and my father exchanged on your wedding day?"

"Yes, and the green platter—show them the date in it, '1766,' and—well, a man once said that the oak cabinet of my grandfather was worth a good deal.

Some of them must bring a hundred gulden, or all of them together will, and we must begin to pay back Gasper Wolfovert's loss."

Then the girl understood. She had been utterly amazed at the idea of selling the big silver spoons, one with a fish on the end of the handle and the other with a boat. These were the never-parted-with, the significant tokens of the husband's care and calling and the wife's share of the same.

"Yes, show everything that will sell and I will go to see Wolfovert to-day," sighed Marget; but fortunately no tourists came to Marken that day, and Wolfovert forbade Dirk's mother to sell her heirlooms. He said that he would consider them pledged to him if Dirk never came back, but, for the present, let them stay where they were. Ten more months went by and the mother grew sick with hope deferred and wondered if she were wrong to pray, but she could not stop.

It must have been on one of those days when his mother was praying for him that Dirk attracted the attention of a famous surgeon who was walking through his ward in the asylum. The moment before a rough attendant had pointed out Dirk as that "Dutch fool," but just after that the child of a servant tumbled over Dirk's foot. He picked it up quickly, smoothed its hair, gazing at it with a pathetic sort of wonder that gave his dull face a momentary look of intelligence.

"With that head a man ought not to be a fool," said the surgeon, stopping to ask who Dirk was and how he came there. A week later, a class of medical students collected to see Professor H. perform an operation, and Dirk was the subject. There was no one to consent, to object, or to care. It was an operation "in the interests of science," so the professor remarked. So it was, and in the interest, too, of a praying mother, whose God had directed the professor's steps that day when he passed through Dirk's ward. The professor knew nothing of that; perhaps he never had heard of the little island of Marken; but the operation on poor Dirk's brain was a success, just the same, and not long after the "Dutch fool" was able to tell his sorrowful little history to an interpreter who was brought to the asylum for that purpose. People said that Professor H. was a "cold-blooded scientist," and only "looked on his patients as subjects." All the same, he it was who got Dirk into a decent suit of clothes, explained the past to him, took him down to a boat of the Holland-American Line, bound for Rotterdam, and started him homeward. Yes, and in Dirk's old pocketbook were the Dutch gulden, all safe; for being paper and of no known value to any one who might have stolen them heretofore they had been left with him.

One fine evening in May, Dirk's mother and sister walked down to see a boat that had come in from Amsterdam. They led between them little blue-

eyed Pieter, dressed as every Marken boy is dressed, just like a little girl, except for one embroidered patch on the top of his little cap; but already Pieter was thinking of the day when he should dress like a man—he never said any more "like my father." Marget and Christina walked slowly, and when they heard a shout go up from the people who were down nearer the boat landing they wondered what had happened. Then a man broke away from the rest and ran toward the cabins.

The next hour or two was like a blessed dream. Was that Dirk who sat on the bank outside the door hugging little Pieter to his breast, while he told to a crowd of the islanders such a story? Christina listened, wiping the tears from her eyes, yet feeling half crazy with joy. Gasper Wolfovert, then and there, made Dirk a present of one-half of the money that had traveled so far, and Dirk's mother—well, she said the least of all. Her heart was too full of thanks to the Lord for his answers to her prayers.

Dirk never traveled any more, but he made a good son and father. Sometimes little Pieter says, "When I am a man I shall go to America—but I want to go with a whole head."

THE WRITING IN THE MOSQUE.

One lovely morning the sunshine made golden the quaint nooks and corners of a street in the world's oldest city. In this Damascus street one might buy almost anything from a brass cup for a *piastre* to an Ispahan rug for a thousand dollars. Going each way were throngs of Syrians, jet-black Nubians, Greeks in full white skirts and tasseled shoes, stately Arabs, Persians in gorgeous silks, or pale Jews with ringlets behind their ears. The people jostled mules or stepped aside for laden camels, noiselessly making progress with their heads aloft, as if contemptuous of the hubbub going on below them.

Everything there was strange and oriental, but the appearance of two persons—one a blue-eyed sweet-faced young lady riding a donkey, while walking at her side was her father. He was just such a kindly well-to-do American as we see everywhere in our favored land. The fat and lazy donkey, adorned by a necklace of gilt sequins and blue beads, was quite willing to stop at every bazaar, having learned already that bazaars amused Ruth Emerson. Her

father also enjoyed peeping into their dusky interiors, full of gleaming metals or jewels or rugs or rare inlaid furniture, and all open to the street.

"It is like a scene in the 'Arabian Nights,' father, and I fancy my name must be Fatima. Do I look like a princess?"

"Well, scarcely like one belonging to this locality! Your eyes are far too blue; but you are my princess, dear."

"You good, patient father! I am glad you mean to get a dragoman, I fear I tire you with whims and waste your time."

Mr. Emerson did not speak, but glancing suddenly up, Ruth saw with surprise in his eyes such a look of pathetic tenderness that the quick tears filled her own. She turned hastily, pretending to watch a flock of doves circling between a turret and the deep, blue sky. She understood the look of love and longing.

Six months before a famous doctor in Vienna had told Mr. Emerson that the heart trouble, to which Ruth had grown almost used, was assuming a new form—that life for her might mean not years, but probably months. He had not told Ruth, but she guessed it, and loving life, did not fear death.

A moment after though, Mr. Emerson said quite cheerfully, "The young fellow who will take us to the Great Mosque to-day has been highly recommended as a guide. If you like him we will engage him for a

month or more. Only don't fancy you will get rid of me, little girl."

Ruth gave him a loving pat on the arm, saying, "I hope that this dragoman will talk less and know more than our last."

In a moment or two they reached a bazaar for the sale of silks and embroidered stuffs. A coarse, dark young man in oriental garb stood at the entrance. When Mr. Emerson halted he greeted them obsequiously, and turning addressed an older man as father. This merchant was seated, smoking a *tchibouk*. He smiled graciously, drew closer his really gorgeous costume and called, "Yusuf!"

A young man, evidently another son, appeared, and receiving Mr. Emerson's card, begged them to be seated, and assuring them that they need buy nothing, asked the pleasure of showing their most beautiful goods. Then he disappeared for a moment.

Yusuf had fine brown eyes and a refined intelligent face, strangely nobler than that of his brother. He returned after a time with black coffee in tiny cups, and when this was tasted he showed gold-embroidered robes, gleaming gauzes and shimmering silks. Ruth bought a pretty *kafich* or handkerchief, while Mr. Emerson explained that he wanted Yusuf to take them to the Great Mosque. With effusive politeness, covering amusing shrewdness, the old father made sure that Yusuf was to be well paid; then he declared there was not such another guide in all Damascus. In

this case he was not lying, although he would have said the same had his son been half-witted.

In a short time Yusuf was ready to start—a manly handsome fellow, even if Ruth had to repress a smile at the splendor of his attire, which, queerly enough, did not make him look effeminate.

"Just imagine," she said to her father later, "a college man at home in a gold-braided jacket, a lavender silk skirt, a crimson sash, and a fez with a tassel!"

They traversed another street, made a turn, and passed under a beautiful antique archway. Ruth had seen many mosques, but none had ever impressed her as did this one now before her with its old court and its lovely minarets. Yusuf knew the legend of every stone, one might say, and proved a most interesting guide. He showed the interior, with its old lamps, its pulpit and praying niches, and pointed out the unspeakably holy place, where was kept the head of John the Baptist, although he faintly smiled when Mr. Emerson assured him that he had seen four of these shrines already. Then he took them to see the tomb of Saladin.

By that time they were tired and so returned to the court and sat down to rest. There gazing about at the old fountain, the columns and the inscriptions from the Koran, Ruth asked Yusuf if he knew who built the mosque, and when it was built. Very modestly, but like one quite ready, he answered all her questions, and his story ran thus:

"The Great Mosque must have been a heathen temple, either Greek or Roman, none knew which, before Jesus came, perhaps a century." Then he said, hesitatingly, "It belonged to 'infidels' until about the seventh century, when Walid, a great Khalif, made it one of the most magnificent mosques in the world."

At this moment a stranger asked Yusuf the way to the castle and Mr. Emerson told Ruth that the gap in Yusuf's story meant that for three hundred years and more this was the great church for Christians throughout Syria. After the apostolic age the faith spread rapidly in Damascus, and Arcadius, the son of Theodosius, dedicated this building to the service of God and his Son, our Lord.

"Strange to say, Ruth," he added, "after over a thousand years of Moslem rule there still stands high over a portal here somewhere this inscription: "Thy kingdom, O Christ, is an everlasting kingdom, and thy dominion lasts throughout all generations.'"

"Can you show us where it is?" asked Ruth of Yusuf.

He complied in silence and then Ruth, being tired, gave back the yellow slippers she had worn over her shoes lest her infidel feet defile the sacred mosque. Mr. Emerson made an engagement with Yusuf, helped Ruth to mount her donkey, and they returned to their hotel.

"What do you know of Yusuf, father?" she asked. "He interests me."

"The consul here told me that the old merchant whom we saw is very rich. He has two sons—the one who stood at the door with a fly-brush in his hand, and who is a surly sort of a fellow, and Yusuf. This Yusuf learned all he could in the Moslems' school, then insisted on taking a college course at Beyrout. There he received a fine education but left college, as he entered, a follower of Mohammed."

"Father, a lady in Jerusalem told me that a Mohammedan never becomes a Christian."

"Then she was a very ignorant woman. True it is, the followers of Mohammed are very bigoted, but many have become Christians."

The next day Yusuf entered on his duties, which were to act as their guide and general man of business, for as strangers they constantly needed an interpreter who spoke Arabic. At first he did not seem to think that Ruth was of any consequence, but soon he learned from her father that she alone was to be considered, and later, he, too, guessed the reason. After that he studied her pleasure in everything. To Ruth he seemed, as she told her father, like queer Oriental poems she had tried to read and given up as too mystical. That was when they talked of ideas instead of things. They went somewhere every day, either inside the fascinating old city, with its contrasts of squalor and magnificence, or outside in the lovely

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gardens, where flowers, fruits and sparkling streams made a sort of earthly paradise.

One day Ruth told Yusuf, "I like the old mosque as well as anything in all Damascus. Let us go there often."

It made no difference to Mr. Emerson where they went if only his daughter was interested, so it happened that they often watched the people come and go in the old court; her father always within call while Ruth rested and Yusuf answered questions.

One day, Yusuf never quite knew how it happened, Ruth told him plainly that she could not live very long, but spoke of dying as cheerily as if she was talking of going to America. It puzzled him, but he made no comment. Not long after, pointing out one of the three beautiful minarets of the mosque, he said: "We call that one *Modinet Isa*, because men say when Jesus comes to judge the world he will descend first to this minaret."

"What does your religion teach you of Jesus, and which do you think greater, Jesus or Mohammed?" asked Ruth, simply.

Now if a merely curious tourist had asked Yusuf that question he would have received a polite answer telling him really nothing; but Ruth was so earnest, yet so intelligent, so different from any woman Yusuf had ever known, that he told her a good deal of the religion of Islam. After that talk she managed so that there was no retreating into silence again

when she began to speak of sacred things; for she always did it with infinite tact. She used to show him an English copy of the Koran and a pocket Bible, beguiling him into comparisons along various lines. She never argued, or lectured, or attacked his own belief. She labored and prayed that he himself would see the contrast between Jesus and Mohammed, for, as she told her father, "Yusuf has just shut his soul into Moslem darkness, and he must get the shutters down. Once he opens his heart and his brain he cannot keep out the light, for 'The Light of the world is Jesus,'" she sang softly to herself.

He was indeed the Light of the world here and of the next world as well, or else Ruth would never have been the happy girl she was.

Yusuf was not ignorant. No man with his college record could have been; but his heart was full of hatred toward what he fancied was Christianity. He had never known intimately any people like the Emersons, and he studied them from every point. His arrangements compelled him to appear soon after their breakfast hour, so he often arrived before family prayers, to which he listened politely. He went with them to Protestant churches, to schools, to missions. He learned to know how Christians lived, thought and worked for others. He pondered it all in serene Oriental fashion. Meanwhile the days grew warmer and the city less healthful.

One day, sitting in a quiet nook in a corridor of the

mosque, where Ruth had been sketching, she put aside her work, saying, "Yusuf, we are going soon to the mountains; the heat makes me weaker. Perhaps I never will come here again with you. Will you not promise me something?"

He looked startled, then replied, "Speak, and—I will hear."

"Every time you come here look over the door away up and read that inscription: 'Thy kingdom, O Christ, is an everlasting kingdom,' then ask why the Moslem's crescent is better than the Christian's cross. I want you to keep my Bible and study it. You say the Koran is good. Well, there is a German saying that 'it is not wise to sacrifice the best to the good.' I think you must find the Bible is best. Don't forget me, Yusuf! You have been very kind to us."

The tears came in Yusuf's great soft eyes. He took Ruth's hand and, Eastern fashion, carried it to his forehead, then to his breast, and kissed it, saying, "Peace go with thee."

That was their last talk. The next day the Emersons found the city too warm and departed for the hill country. There Ruth spent a few beautiful weeks, then, one morning, when sunrise came all rosy and golden on the heights, she "was not," for the Lord had taken her in the quiet night watches.

Mr. Emerson never went back to Damascus nor heard again from Yusuf; but about a year later a converted Mohammedan was driven from his father's

door. His brother, now the sole heir to that father's riches, stood again at the threshold cursing and reviling the "Christian dog."

Yusuf, with Ruth's Bible in his pocket, richer yet with the love of Jesus in his heart, went forth to be a witness for him. He was not cast down nor forsaken, for he said, "It is enough for the disciple that he be as his Master."

A NEW ENGLAND BROTHER AND SISTER.

IT was a cold November day and the sitting-room at Elm Cottage was dreary, because Molly Rathburn had forgotten to kindle the fire on the old-fashioned hearth. Suddenly there was a tap on the outer door and when Molly cried, "Come in," Miss Grey, her favorite teacher, entered.

"I am off duty earlier than usual, Molly, so I thought I would drop in to find out your decision."

"Well," returned Molly, with a slight hesitation, "I have about decided to go to Aunt Huldah."

"Yes?" said the young lady, looking earnestly at Molly, who was a pretty, intelligent girl of fifteen. She expected Molly to say something more, and perceiving this, Molly added, "It is like this: Uncle James is rich, but stingy about allowing Aunt Huldah any money to spend herself, much less to give away. He would never think of helping Bert to get an education, but he will let me go to live with them. Aunt Huldah says that she can dress me handsomely and will take me everywhere with her. I shall live in an

elegant modern house and have no more housework. Think of the change!" and Molly glanced half scornfully around the simple room with its half-worn furniture. Usually that was a cosey, cheerful room, but of late Molly had let it get dusty and desolate looking.

"Yes, your life will be all luxury, no doubt; I have heard that your uncle has a very grand house. It will be a change." And Miss Grey thought of Molly's hard-working, intelligent father, who died two months before of pneumonia, and of the mother who soon followed him—such a sensible, loving mother, but one who never had the time nor money to be "stylish."

"What will Herbert do?" asked Miss Grey, thinking next of Molly's brother, who was only a little more than a year older than Molly.

"Oh, Bert will rent this cottage if he can, and take one room somewhere; he is too shy to live in any boarding-house, even if he could afford to do it. He will fit himself for college some way and live from hand to mouth, I am afraid."

"Then you could not keep the home if you wanted to stay together?"

Molly blushed and looked rather uncomfortable as she answered:

"Yes, we might with strict economy and the money Bert earns working for the farmers when summer comes."

"But Bert did not care to do it?"

"I have not really asked him."

There was an awkward pause, although why Molly felt it to be so she scarcely knew. Miss Grey opened her lips as if to speak, and then closed them. Two photographs were on the table, and, picking them up, she said, "How pretty!" then turning, read on the back "The Young Pilgrims—original paintings in the Uffizi Gallery, Florence."

"A friend sent them to me Christmas," explained Molly. "Do you know just what the pictures mean?"

"Perhaps," suggested Miss Grey, "they are portraits of the children of some noble family and this is merely a fancy costume, or it is possible that they represent two young pilgrims just ready to start on that strange and terrible Children's Crusade."

"I never heard about it."

"Indeed! It was one of the saddest things in history. Early in the thirteenth century there was a wild and fanatical religious enthusiasm among the young; and fifty thousand boys and girls started under leaders scarcely older than themselves, from France and Germany, for Palestine, to 'rescue the Holy Sepulchre,' as they said, 'from the heathen.' They started away waving banners, singing hymns. They were, at first, well fed and joyful, for everybody on the route was kind to them. Some were tender little children that never before had endured a hardship; but as they grew weary, hungry and ill, they died by hundreds along the rough road. In their

ignorance they had a lofty aim, and, in many cases, no doubt, they started from love to the Saviour. Those were happiest who died along the way, for those who survived were, at the last, sold into slavery. But these pilgrims of the picture seem modern, in spite of their scallop-shell and staff; perhaps they are types of all young pilgrims starting in life."

"I used to like to read the 'Pilgrim's Progress,'" said Molly.

"And I hope," said Miss Grey, putting down the pictures, "that these lovely young pilgrims *knew that they were right before they started.*" Then saying that it was time for her to go home she lingered and when her hand was on the door, added, "Molly, don't decide too hastily; *pray over it.* I do not want you a pilgrim on the wrong road."

Molly, left alone, said to herself, "Miss Grey does not approve of my going. But what harm is there in wanting a home of comfort and ease? I am just a country girl with no style. I can make something of myself if I go to Aunt Huldah."

No, Miss Grey was not satisfied with Molly, but she hesitated to advise her. As she went home she thought: "Poor Herbert; awkward and homely, sensitive and capable of making a fine man if he has help and sympathy. But he will get it from no one else if Molly deserts him now. She could make a cheerful home, and could study with him; it might be dull at first, but she never would regret it. Who can blame

Herbert if he gets discouraged and when lonely goes to concert halls, saloons and the places all open and ready to ruin their victims! Bert looked so brave and proud one day before Aunt Huldah's letter came! He told me then that they could keep the home and how he meant to be the man of the house and care for Molly."

Miss Grey had been gone an hour and more, but a part of that time Molly spent thinking of herself as a pilgrim at the crossing of two roads and deciding which she would take after all; then she was very busy in the last twenty minutes. She did not see Herbert coming slowly down the lane home. He did not hurry at all, for as they were so soon to shut the house, Molly let things take care of themselves and disorder prevailed. To-night, Herbert's plain strong face was sad. Even Molly had not yet found out how he missed his mother, who, although never stylish, knew how to make home the happiest place on earth. After Aunt Huldah's letter came and Molly seemed so pleased, he had said nothing of any plan he had made before that. He was very unselfish, but the old house was dearer than ever now the time approached when they must shut and leave it empty. He was depressed as he trudged along in the chilly night air.

The little outer hall was dark and he expected to find the sitting-room the same, but when he opened the door he exclaimed with pleasure, "Oh, how nice!"

A roaring fire blazed between the andirons; its rosy light danced on the walls and its genial warmth penetrated every corner. From the kitchen came the delicious odor of waffles, the kind that Herbert especially liked, and Molly had not "bothered" to give him a very good dinner at noon. She sang out now a cheerful greeting that gave no hint of certain tears lately shed, and soon the small round table was drawn into the glow of the fire, while sister and brother sat down together. Molly, glancing at Herbert, was suddenly surprised and touched to see how careworn and sad his face had lately grown. Then, odd as the comparison seemed, there was something in his manner that made her think of her faithful dog Rover when someone dealt him an unexpected and wholly undeserved blow.

"Herbert," she said, slipping a hot waffle on his plate, "I have changed my mind about going to Aunt Huldah's. How could I go away, like a great pig, to enjoy all sorts of things and leave you, the only brother I have in the world? Uncle James does not care for me, and any way how much more independent we can feel in our home, if we do live plain."

"Do you really mean it, Molly?"

"Of course I do, and I will make the place comfortable, now my mind is made up. We can work and study and be as happy as—as—Punch and Judy together," laughed Molly with a queer quaver in her voice that Bert did not notice. However, she knew

by the delight in her brother's face how he had hated to give up his home, and she also knew that she could trust him when he exclaimed: "I will help you all I can, Molly, to have a good time; you shall have everything that I can earn for you, and we will be glad hereafter. I did not like the idea of your getting so awfully stylish as to forget me or be ashamed of me. Now you won't be if I can help it."

This was a long speech for Bert, but it made Molly happy—so contented that she wondered that she had thought it hard to give up all that Aunt Huldah promised.

The next day Molly started anew her housekeeping with "Punch," as she gayly dubbed her brother, and soon it was remarkable what fun as well as comfort the two got out of their joint efforts. As time went by Molly adorned the house with simple but pretty devices, while Bert found time after study to make a garden, and he always helped his sister in her heavy tasks, because they kept no servant.

Aunt Huldah was disgusted. She had meant her niece to become a "stylish girl," able to shine in good society, instead of which that niece kept up her Latin with Bert, and made the house shine so brightly that Bert spent all his evenings at home.

When the spring came they were out of debt and had saved something toward Bert's college fund. One May morning when Bert was wondering for what farmer he should work that Summer, Molly demurely

remarked, "Bert, you know that among other fine things offered, Aunt Huldah promised to take me summers to fashionable watering-places."

"Yes, I knew, but you never got to any."

"Well, this is going to be a very gay season at Sweet Spring Lake, and I have about decided to go there."

"Oh!" gasped poor Bert, in a slow shocked way. It was hard to have to realize that the home comfort and pleasant companionship was after all coming to an end.

"Yes, I mean to go, but only on one condition; you must come with me."

"I—in my new gingham shirt, perhaps—and will Uncle James pay my little bills? What in the world ails you, Judy?"

"Oh, Uncle James is not in it, nor Aunt Huldah either, and I am sensible to the last, so don't look as if I had gone suddenly cracked," laughed Molly.

"Looks like it, I must say!"

"Appearances are deceitful. It is this way, Punchy: I hear that a very quiet, though very fine, class of people go to Sweet Spring Lake, and this summer the service is all to be by college men and girls. Now let us engage there for good pay. We can save the house expense through the summer, then what I make, added to what you make, will bring up your college money ever so much. I would not like to go alone, but with you it might be fine."

After consideration Bert thought the same. This brother and sister were of good New England ancestry with plenty of "proper pride," but their common sense told them that they could not bemean themselves by any honest work. When the summer came, therefore, they were among the self-respecting young people who did the work in two great hotels at the Lake. Here, in the height of the season, came Aunt Huldah with Uncle James, and in the dining-hall it was that the lady almost fainted when her pretty, modest-mannered niece asked her if she would take "lemon pie or ice cream."

It was too much! The good lady was not unkind, but she was forced to leave the hotel the next day. Uncle James, usually morose, actually roared with laughter when Aunt Huldah said there was "malaria" in the air. But more surprising still, when Bert brushed his coat he gave him a tip of fifty dollars, and laughingly said, "Peg away, my boy, and you will get there, as sure as you live."

If by "there" Uncle James meant college, Bert did arrive in due time and excellent order. Molly rented the cottage then and took a tiny apartment in the college town, where she studied with, and cooked for, her brother. There was plenty of other girls' brothers who were satisfied with Molly's style and accomplishments, if Aunt Huldah was not, and many an anxious mother would have rejoiced if she had known the pure and elevating influence exerted by this New

England maiden who spoke her mind about drinking, swearing and fast living; who never welcomed a young friend of Bert's to their little home that he did not see the beauty of her daily life and the purity of its aims. Weak and erring fellows her brother more than once brought there, that they might both try their best to help such to a better way. When Bert finished his college course, Uncle James offered to take him into a business "where he might get rich before he was middle-aged if he would give his whole mind to it"; but great was his Uncle's disgust when Bert said his mind could be better employed in working for others, and that he meant to study for the ministry. He (Uncle James) then agreed with his wife that young people nowadays were not "practical."

These young people did not worry about other people's opinion. The day Bert graduated he told Molly that she was the best sister a fellow ever had, and he thanked God she had not deserted him; but instead, had helped, loved, and encouraged him to make a man of himself, and while doing that she herself had become a noble-hearted woman, quite accomplished enough.

Molly said, "Oh, Punch! I am afraid that you are prejudiced in my favor."

BADURA.

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HOW BADOURA LEFT EGYPT.

BADOURA was a little girl who lived in Egypt. She had pretty features, soft brown eyes, a light brown skin and one of the sweetest voices ever heard. She was ten years old, and in about two years she would be married. It would be thought very sad were she not married by the time she was fifteen.

Badoura's dress was a single little gown of dark blue cotton, reaching from her neck to her brown feet. She had just begun to wear a breadth of dark cloth, which she was to draw, like a veil, over her face before strangers; but as yet she always forgot that or left it at home. Her mother never forgot hers; but then she was an old woman of thirty, black and wrinkled, with horrid tatooing across her forehead and on her breast. Her voice was harsh, and everything about her appearance, ugly. But she had a mother's heart, and loved her little Badoura dearly.

Badoura's father, mother and one brother lived at Luxor, in Egypt. Their home was as good as any native hovel in the village, for they owned, as furniture, several rusty pots, some water jars and a fine saddle

for a camel. The place never could look empty because of the sociable habits of the goat, a yellow dog and two or three hens. Sometimes Seti, the donkey, joined the family there, and doubtless the buffalo cow, their only other possession, would have been allowed to come in, too, but she liked better to roll in the mud of the river.

One beautiful January morning all was quiet in the native quarters; Mustapha, the father, and Hassan, the brother, had gone down to the river, bathed, spread their rugs, bowed toward Mecca and said their accustomed prayers. As the soul welfare of Badoura and her mother was secure in the men's righteousness, the mother was at home getting something for all to eat.

Suddenly a great uproar arose outside. It was caused by the sight of a steamboat down the Nile. Every man or boy who could get hold of a donkey, no matter how old, or little, or lame, or moth-eaten, dragged him down to the landing place to hire him out to the tourists who were coming to see the ruined temples of Karnak and of Luxor. Boys, too small to hold a donkey, but able to run, rushed, wildly yelling, to the water's edge, ready to dive for the *piastres*, or coppers the people would fling into the Nile. When the boat came to land there was a short season of Bedlam; men shouted the merits of their donkeys, the donkeys loudly brayed their own. Guides calmly walked off the boat, and, with a whip of rhinoceros

hide, succeeded in quieting the commotion as if by magic. Five minutes later a long procession of tourists, mounted on donkeys, or walking under white umbrellas, were making their way toward Karnak.

Mustapha strode along by his donkey. He was clad in a long white robe and seemed as stately and dignified now as he had been noisy and excited at the landing. The man on his donkey wanted to talk. Mustapha could only shake his head, wishing most earnestly that he knew a little French, German, or English, for then he could earn so much more. The pockets of these Christians, whom he secretly despised, were full of silver, and he had seen how freely they gave when one could talk to them about everything that they saw.

Just behind him was Hassan, trying to sell curios. He knew a few words—enough to vow that his little imitation beetles, or scarabs, were three thousand years old, and that the small, green plaster god that he kept shaking under the tourist's nose was found in the mummy case of a Pharaoh. Hassan meant to know more English if he lived much longer. Badoura was there also, and happy as happy could be. She ran lightly along, with a slim jar of cool water on her head; the sun was sure to be hot soon, and the lady on Hassan's donkey might be thirsty. Meanwhile she crooned away in pretty broken talk, like the tinkle of silvery bells: "O ladee, beautiful ladee. O ladee with lovely nose, you buy blue beads, ladee? O

pretty ladee on donkey, got so nice eyes; you want drink, you ladee?" and every few moments, "good-night, ladee," by way of politeness, with no thought of departure. Then Badoura, being a thoughtful little girl, would wonder where these queer white-faced people came from.

Everything was beautiful. The bean fields were all aquiver with red blossoms, from which, every now and then, a lark would soar, singing until lost in the bluest of the blue skies. The barley fields were vivid green, and where there was no irrigation the sand was as yellow as gold. Pretty soon the procession reached the great gateway of Karnak, the grandest ruin, perhaps, on earth—a temple built by thousands of poor workmen, when human life was of no value to Egyptian rulers. Many a day Badoura had spent with Hassan climbing over these fallen columns or roaming after visitors through vast courts and magnificent halls. She marveled over the great pillars, colored in beautiful reds, gold, blue, like a peacock's plumes, or covered with pictures of gods and goddesses, worshiped centuries before our Saviour came on earth. About worship, Badoura knew little, but she had heard of Allah, or the one God, whom Mohammedans, like her father, worshiped. She had been in a mosque once, where he went to pray; but of prayer, as Christian children understand prayer, she knew nothing, nor had she ever so much as heard of a Saviour.

This day, when she had sold her beads to the lady, who had also given her a big soft roll and an orange from a little basket, Badoura followed her about like an affectionate little dog, and really thought her as "pretty" as she had called her on the way. By and by, this lady talked a long time with a dragoman named Tewfik, one who knew the children and who talked English well. She seemed to be talking to him about Hassan and Badoura, and later talked with their father. Badoura reflected that they had done nothing wrong; Hassan had stolen nothing, having no good chance, and Badoura never stole, being a girl, and so, naturally stupid. At sundown, when the air was cool, and a soft rosy light was on land and river, Badoura wandered home along the water's edge; she liked to watch the boats, often white-winged, like huge birds, or to look at the waterfowl standing on one leg among the tall reeds.

That night there was a long and earnest talk between Mustapha and his son, Hassan. The silent mother overheard all the talk about one of the women who had been that day to see the ruins. She was a missionary, and with helpers, was about to establish a school near by where English could be taught, and, what Mustapha detested, the Christian religion. Still, Hassan was eager to learn the first, and there was no other way so good. At last the father agreed that Hassan might go to school to learn to speak English.

Then they remembered that the lady had made a

most vexatious condition: Hassan could not go unless his little sister could go, too. Now, what was the use of Badoura learning how to read? Little girls, like that, were only different from buffalo calves in that the girls could talk—but the folly of their knowing how to talk in English when too old to chase the tourists' donkeys. A thought that he was half ashamed of then crossed Mustapha's mind. Badoura was so pretty and graceful she would make much money as a dancing girl, and to know English might increase her gain in that. Badoura's mother would not have liked that idea. True, the dancing girls of Luxor wore gay muslin robes, and did no work, but fluttered about unveiled, as gay as bright butterflies, and as ignorant of the real meaning of life or death as those insects of a day. But Badoura's mother wanted her little gentle Badoura to be good, as she herself dimly understood goodness—not ever to become a dancing girl.

Hassan and his sister went to the mission school for the next two years. The boy learned very rapidly, impelled by the love of gain. The little girl learned all that Hassan learned, and all that he was careful to avoid learning, about the great truths of the Bible and about Jesus. Her first motive was love of the lady, but her next, and at last her strongest, was love of the truth itself. All Badoura learned she taught to her poor mother, and instinctively kept from her father, who would have taken her out of

school had he realized what she was becoming—yes, had become—a little Christian girl. At the end of two years the teacher was taken ill, and the school broken up, but Badoura could have gone no longer.

Her father was taking serious thought for her future. A certain fat, old Moslem had seen and admired Badoura, and asked to have her for one of his wives. From another quarter came the urgent request that Badoura become a dancing girl. True, she was older than most such girls when they began to dance, and there had been none of that profession in the family; but in this instance it meant considerable money to Mustapha. Badoura talked with her mother, and both were oppressed with fear. Badoura prayed that God would never let her be a dancer, no, nor the third wife of that man she disliked so much. The mother shook her head, seeing no way of escape from this last fate; but there was one. Badoura's strength began to fail, and walking only a little way in the sand wearied her.

One day a messenger from Cairo came to see Mustapha, and to make a proposition to him in regard to Badoura. Her teacher was stopping a few weeks before sailing for England. She had come to love Badoura very much. She said through the messenger, that she knew Badoura was not well, for a doctor at the mission had said that if the girl was not better nourished and cared for, she would fade away soon; so she asked that Badoura might return to England

with her. She promised that in four or five years she would bring or send Badoura home. She did not explain her hope that then the young girl would be an earnest Christian, eager to teach and help her own people. She offered Mustapha a sum equal to about one hundred dollars if he consented. The letter made a sensation when read by the messenger.

Mustapha, in spite of bigotry, ignorance and greed, loved his gentle little girl, and did not want her to go so far away; but she was getting strangely weak, and might slip out of life entirely. The change would do her good—then one hundred dollars was a great sum to a man whose daily earnings can be counted in pennies. Religion? Oh, what matter was it what a girl believed, when her father was a pious Moslem? If it had been Hassan, now, it would have been different, and a risk not to be taken. So, at last, with small attention to the opinion of the mother, Mustapha said that the girl might take the next boat to Cairo, if a messenger was on the landing to first pay the one hundred dollars.

Badoura's mother was half broken-hearted and half glad—mothers are made so that they can be that way; she was desolate thinking of her loneliness, for her son thought of her only as a drudge, but Badoura gave her love; yet she was happy to realize this was for her child's good. Badoura was pulled both ways, and glad her father decided for her; she promised never to forget her mother, and said the teacher would tell

her how to send messages back. Thus it came about that Badoura lived and went out into a world of which she knew nothing. She grew strong, and she learned in a lovely English home all that could be taught her of the religion of Jesus, learned it with mind and heart. She became a beautiful woman, and five years from the time she left Egypt she went back to spend her life in teaching the gospel to her own people.

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PIERRE'S "HUNGERING AND THIRSTING."

It was one of the coldest winters ever known in Paris. The rich drove about bundled in furs; the poor tried in vain to keep warm. In the basement of an old tenement-house, in a side street of Paris, lived little lame Pierre and his grandfather, old Jacques. Pierre's father had been a railway porter who, up to the spring before had managed to care for his child and his old father; but since he died it was a mystery how they had lived. Yet, not quite a mystery either, for the poor are kind to each other, and so long as they could spare it many a "bite and sup" had their neighbors divided with them; but this hard winter food was scarce. Then old Jacques came of a Huguenot stock and was not a Romanist; he had no religion beyond honesty and a morality that resulted from early teaching.

One cold afternoon, when they had no fire, Pierre said, "Daddy, let us go again into some warm church and stay as long as we can."

"Most of the sacristans (or sextons) have seen us too often; they know we drop no sous in the poor-box and do not cross ourselves with holy water."

"It is easy enough to cross ourselves, if that is all," said Pierre, shivering as with an ague chill.

"Perhaps, but it has always gone against me—still we shall be stiff if we stay here; so come!"

Little curly-headed Pierre had on already all the clothes he owned, and old Jacques' thick coat had gone to the pawnshop a month before; therefore he had to go out into the cruel cold wearing the blue cotton blouse which a peasant wears in the summer. At the first church he bade Pierre go in and wait while he "looked for something"—whether something to do, to eat, or to wear, he himself did not know. Pierre went in at the great door and crept to a corner, near the heat pipes, where he fairly gloated in the comfort of the warmth once more. After a while, he amused himself gazing at the painted angels on the ceiling and wondered what kind of women were born with big wings. Pierre was as ignorant as any heathen.

Old Jacques, out in the blast, broke into a trot lest his thin blood should congeal in his veins; but he hurried he knew not where. At one corner he espied a bit of dried bread dropped in the gutter. He darted at it like some famished animal, and crammed it into his half-toothless mouth, swallowing it before he thought. "Poor Pierre—but it was such a little morsel!"

Before a baker's shop he halted and could not go on for gazing at the warm loaves, the brown, heaped-up rolls within the window. A shabby woman came out with six of these penny rolls in her striped handkerchief. She looked at shivering Jacques, his parted lips and eager eyes then, almost with rude haste, as if she could not do it unless she hurried, she thrust one of those precious rolls into his trembling old hand, saying: "Take it, father; and God pity us both!"

"*Merci! Merci!*" he cried in shrill gratitude, then pushing it deep down in his pocket he trotted back to Pierre, afraid to look at it until the child had his full share, for he himself was so deathly faint. A young man, passing him just before he reached the church, gave him a little paper. The poor have an instinct against any waste, and old Jacques thrust it in with the bread; it might help to light a fire. He found little Pierre as comfortable as a warm kitten, and Jacques sat himself gratefully down as if to thaw his stiffened limbs, while each munched his half roll and vaguely longed for a miracle that might multiply it tenfold.

After it had disappeared, Jacques, who could read a little, studied the paper, held a few inches from his frosty nose. There was a street and number on it, and this text: "*Bienheureux sont ceux qui sont affamés et altérés de la justice; car ils seront rassasiés.*" "Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after

righteousness, for they shall be filled." The old man shook his head; it was too much for his weak brain; but Pierre's eyes were bright with a new idea. Here was some sort of a promise to those who were hungry and he knew all about that condition, although he had never considered it "*bienheureux,*" as the paper said—that is, happy or fortunate.

"Daddy, it is a *soup hall!* Old Marie told me she had heard of one for all who were starving!"

Old Jacques had never begged; he had a peasant's honest pride, but that would not now fill poor little Pierre's empty stomach. He studied the number and street, then muttered, "It is not too far; we will go."

About an hour later it was evening, and the door of a hall in one of the branch stations of the McAll Mission opened for Jacques and Pierre to creep in, wondering if they might be allowed there. The warm air smote them with a genial welcome; then a kind-faced woman pointed to a seat. There were twenty-five or thirty persons assembled, but no sign yet of anything to eat.

"Perhaps they dance or perform first," thought Pierre, who had peeped into low concert halls sometimes; then he was delighted with the music, for next all the people sang a sweet low hymn together in a minor chord. It touched both the old man and the boy, making the former remember a good mother, dead seventy years ago, and recalling to Pierre his

father, and even a little dog that he loved and missed. Yes, in a dim way, too, it suggested the angels seen in the church—and he knew not *what*, but longed for something kind and good. There was a prayer then from an elderly man, in simple earnest words that Jacques well understood, although he felt as a person who hears a language forgotten since his childhood.

But the service was almost ended, and about the time that our waifs were comfortably warm again the last hymn was sung and the people began to go away. It had been rather a long walk, and Pierre's lame foot ached. He had come all that distance cheered by a certain hope. He was only a little chap, and now the big tears filled his eyes as he sobbed, "There is not going to be any good soup, Daddy!"

"What is this, my little fellow? Are you hungry?" asked the "white-haired praying man," as Pierre later used to call him. "That will never do in this cold weather!" and then with a few questions, he got from old Jacques the pathetic little story, all the more touching because he was evidently ashamed to be so poor and hungry.

"Your paper brought you to just the place, little man!" he exclaimed, with a voice like a big brother of all mankind, "Come now, you shall be 'filled,' and God grant that you may be *bienheureux*."

He led them a little way down the street to a plain clean restaurant, where both had not only a great bowl of soup, but a dish of meat, such as neither had

tasted for weeks. When they could eat no more, he filled a basket for them, then out they went into the cold, but stopped soon at a second-hand shop where the shivering old man was given a warmer garment. As we have said, Pierre knew nothing about angels, and he discovered no big wings about this man, but he realized what heavenly ministration is like when the gentleman followed them home, and, finding all they had told was less than the truth about their poverty, he saw a fire in their grate before he left them, and had their promise to come to the Mission room the next night.

How Pierre had hated the winter evenings before this! No light except what came in from the street; nothing to do but to sleep, and one cannot sleep forever.

From that time on, for a week, every night, the old man and the lame boy nestled into a snug corner of the McAll Mission Room, listening eagerly to psalms, hymns, prayers, and above all the wonderful stories of a Father in heaven, who loved them, of a Saviour who came to redeem them. Pierre might have understood less, but he gave his grandfather no rest after these times, asking what this and that meant. And to old Jacques came back the lessons of his youth and of his Christian mother. Both would gladly have come for what they were learning, but certainly it did not make life any the less pleasant that, always after the service the "white-haired praying man" would pat

Pierre's curly head and whisper, with kind eyes twinkling, "There really is going to be some warm soup, Pierre," and there always was—that or something as good.

Now the best help is the kind that shows people how to help themselves. Jacques was old, but, when well fed, tough and nimble. Oh, how proud he was when he was hired to sweep, dust and care for the Mission rooms, with pay enough to keep himself and Pierre in simple comfort! There were daily meetings, and so many things going on that they were in the warm rooms almost all day. When they trudged home at night they could afford a fire now and a supper. It pleased the "praying man" that Pierre wanted every night at least one of the neighbors who had been kind to them to eat with them, and all were told of the Mission, to which, sooner or later, they found their way. The Romanists liked to go after they saw that they were welcome, and their common sense told them that what they heard was good and helpful.

Well, life was about as full of interest to Pierre as need be when Christmas came, and then there was a Christmas festival and a tree. Not one who reads this story can tell what that was to this little cripple, born to such poverty as seldom exists, even in a city. He never had a plaything in his life, never a pet but the street dog that was lost in a fortnight and bewailed for a year. Now Pierre had a grand supper

after the dazzling tree, a box of sweets, a new crutch that helped him greatly, a lot of second-hand playthings, and—think of it!—a warm new suit of clothes, a cap and new strong shoes. He now wanted to go to heaven when he was done with earth—did little, curly-headed Pierre, but he asked the "white-haired praying man" that night if it was "really much nicer than the Mission when they had a Christmas tree!" He privately assured himself that angels (he had asked Jacques about them) might be nice, too, even with those big wings that he did not see the beauty of; but this "praying man" was as good as he could imagine anyone on earth to be. Perhaps Pierre was right, for this disciple was truly like his Master.

CHRISTINA THE UNWORTHY.

ALMOST three hundred years ago there was born in Sweden a little girl whose father was one of the best of kings and the noblest of men. Bloody wars raged in his time and in the battle of Lützen this great Gustavus Adolphus lost his life. While living, he always tried not only to lead his soldiers to victory, but to teach them how to act like Christian men, fighting the good fight of faith. He reigned in the days when Protestants all over Europe were struggling for religious liberty, and Gustavus Adolphus was looked upon as a great leader.

Now, knowing that his little daughter must in time be Queen after him, he hoped and planned and prayed that she might be a Christian woman, who should work, as he had done, for the true good of Sweden. Little Christina was not exactly beautiful, but she was lovable, witty, and had such a fine strong intellect that her father had taught her as thoroughly as if she had been a boy. In those days girls did not learn much besides embroidery, music, dancing and perhaps, French; but learned men taught Christina Latin, Greek, and the sciences. But study did not

make her dull in other things. Little Christina dressed like a boy and, mounted on a big fast horse, used to race over the country, riding as long and as fast as any hunter in the royal train. She could swim and skate, and delighted to roam about the forests, getting stronger every year.

When Christina was only six years old she lost her father, but a little while before he died he held her up in the assembled court, promising that she should be trained to protect their rights, and to stand with them for religious liberty. The wise old councilors and loyal people kissed Christina's tiny hand and, at first, almost idolized her for that good father's sake. They were sure she would prove the best and wisest queen in history. In truth, she must have been far more brilliant, original and interesting than the little princess who became, in after years, Queen Victoria of England. But we are told that Victoria meekly begged her advisors to "pray for her" and said that she wanted "to be good." Christina, on the contrary, *wanted her own way*, and at heart cared nothing about the welfare of her country.

When she became of age, and even several years earlier, the Swedish people were anxious to have her crowned; for, of course, such a splendidly educated, ambitious young girl would do great things, and really Christina had far more power as a queen than Victoria ever had. Then, again, her personal character mattered greatly, and just here Christina failed

her people most grievously. She was not a Christian. At heart she cared nothing for the Protestant cause, which her father lived and died to establish. It seems incredible, but she soon began to sneer at and to ridicule as "coarse" and "vulgar" the common people who were ready to lay down their lives for her. Then it came to be with Christina as it *always is* with any young person who gratifies every whim, listens to no advice and silences the voice of conscience. She insulted her faithful subjects, neglected her duties, and when the people protested she flung aside her crown as recklessly as she would have cast away a worthless trinket—and this while life was all before her, as it would seem.

Having resigned her kingdom to a cousin, Christina started off to live a kind of vagabond life, wandering from one royal court to another, always making a nuisance of herself wherever she went. At first, she made herself quite fascinating, for she could talk about anything in a wise, a witty, or a pleasing way; but being selfish, tricky and fearing neither God nor man, she was forever losing friends and gaining foes.

There is in the royal palace at Fontainebleau a long beautiful hall where ignorant servants declare that a ghost walks at midnight. The story arose from the fact that when Christina came to visit the French King Francis she brought with her a young secretary whom she professed to like and to trust. One day he, meaning no harm, told of something that she intended

to keep secret. With no more mercy than a Turkish sultan, Christina ordered the young man to be murdered. The French king did not admire visitors with such dispositions and he hinted to Christina that she might visit some other court. About that time her cousin in Sweden died, leaving the throne again empty, and she offered to go back and be once more the Queen of Sweden. She did not repent of her past; never seemed to realize what a dreadful thing it was to betray and disappoint a whole nation that had once loved and trusted her; she merely decided that it was better to be the Queen of a people she despised than to be a royal nobody, visiting other kings and queens who soon showed anxiety to be rid of her. For the sake of her father, the patient Swedes were willing to give her another chance for right rule, but not for treachery. However, a spoiled child who can't be trusted, won't be watched; so Christina soon was forced to leave Sweden forever. Like a king in ancient history she had been "weighed in the balances" and "found wanting." No young girl ever had a better opportunity of being great if only she had first been good. That failure ruined her life—failing to deserve her name of Christina.

Now, as Christina was never satisfied unless she was making a sensation, soon after leaving Sweden she made up her mind to turn Roman Catholic. She wished the favor of the Pope and the chance to meddle with the affairs of various Catholic nations.

Down she went to Innsbruck, the capital city of the Tyrol, where there is a famous old Franciscan church, and there with much pomp and ceremony she renounced the faith which her noble father had loved better than life, and became in name a Romanist. We say in "name," for even a sincere and God-fearing Romanist Christina never became. Such a bitter, empty, troublous existence was hers after that; going from court to court, always making a discord and sometimes causing crime! She was keen enough to see that those who espoused her cause wanted her treasures of books, jewels, or pictures. She loved nobody—trusted nobody. One wonders if she recalled the old days in Sweden when her father's faithful followers kissed her little hand and vowed to uphold her in the *right*. They kept that vow while they could keep it and be true to their country and their God. *She* had been the faithless one.

So the years passed until Christina became old, but not as old as was Queen Victoria—and not, like her, an honored ruler, a tender mother, a woman respected by the civilized world; she thought to be great without being good, and she was neither. To-day you can see her gorgeous monument in the church of St. Peter's at Rome, and we wish that every young girl who looks at it there might reflect that the finest intellect and the rarest accomplishments are worse than worthless if separated from love to God and love to one's fellow beings.

A JAPANESE LILY.

SHE was as pretty a little creature as you ever saw, and looked like the very expensive dolls in a Japanese bric-à-brac shop. Her name meant Pink Lily in English, perhaps because of the faint pink in her dimpled cheeks. The rest of her skin was the color of rich cream. Lily was the daughter of a Japanese official, and she lived in what her people thought a very handsome house. It would have seemed frail and empty to you, because the partitions were made of screens and there were no large nor heavy furniture. Behind it was a garden with gay flower-pots and shell grotto work; little lakes and quaint bridges, gravel walks and tiny arbors were everywhere. Lily and her small brother, "Ray of the Sun," had each a swing out there, and played with pretty paper playthings, like fishes, birds and funny dragons, often in the form of kites.

One time there came to live next door an English officer, with his wife, two children and their governess. Jim Howard was ten years old and his sister Nellie was eight, just about Pink Lily's age. At first the

English children were very lonely and wished for some of their English cousins to play with them. Between them and the Japanese garden was a high wall; to be sure, there was a locked green gate in the wall, but the Japanese gentleman kept the key, for he owned both houses. One day Jim climbed up, "held on by his chin," as he said, and looked over. When he told Nellie about Pink Lily she was wild to see her. So Jim got down, fixed a green flower-pot upside down, and by "boosting" Nellie, helped her to peep over too; and after that they would not have been real children if they had not found out how to get acquainted. Now it happened, for political reasons, that Lily's father wanted to please the English officer; so one afternoon the green gate was unlocked and the key left in the lock. Next, the children were invited in the garden to see the cherry trees that were all in bloom; wonderful blossoms, much finer than any outside of Japan. Pink Lily looked so lovely in her little, blue silk kimona, or robe, that Nellie put her arms around her and kissed her. That would have frightened her greatly if Nellie had not been little and smiling, for the Japanese do not kiss one another; but her mother had told her that English folks were "queer" and that she must be polite whatever astonishing things these children did, for probably they would not hurt her. It was amusing, because Nellie's mother, who did not know much about the Japanese, told her little girl "to set a good

example" for Pink Lily. Well, there was a servant with the little Japs who talked English, and he told the children all they wanted to know about each other. When he told Nellie that her little friend's name meant in English "Pink Lily," she herself was pleased, and said to herself "I *Pinklie—Pinklie!*" so after that Nellie and Jim called her "Pinklie," for short, as she seemed to like the sound.

The English children found it the funniest, most delightful old garden they had ever seen. In the middle of it was a pool full of pink water-lilies, and that was bordered with blue iris. In the water were bright-colored little fishes. There was a slow old tortoise living under the bushes, and they also had a queer goggle-eyed pet, half toad, half bull-frog, that Pinklie took in her wee hands and petted. The servant called him a *hikigœrn*, saying that he "brought good luck to the family." They were more interested in a lot of really beautiful snails with yellow stripes on their shells, and Pinklie sang to them in the sweetest little voice a kind of kindergarten song:

> "Snail, Snail, put out your horns!
> The wind is blowing, little Snail."

After that they discovered a lot of little kittens with beautiful, long, furry tails and a mother cat without any tail at all. This also the servant explained by saying that as kittens grew older their tails had to be cut off or they turned into demons.

This was too much, and Jim giggled out loud, but he was not heard, because Pinklie's brother came toddling out to them, dressed in silks and embroidery and sash—the sweetest little "Ray of the Sun" that every brightened life for a mother in any land. Remembering how scared Pinklie had looked, Nellie did not offer to kiss him, so he bobbed his little head, bowing as politely as any Japanese gentleman. Then the servant brought from the house what Jim thought was a low broad seat for Ray, but it was a beautiful lacquered *zen* or table, and he put on it all kinds of strange things to eat in lovely dishes. Pinklie and little Ray popped down on the ground at one side, and smiling, pointed their guests to the other.

The servant went back and forth bringing them sweet soft things and sour hard things, things sticky and others like pudding, strange jellies and cakes tasting of rice. Some the visitors liked and some they had to drop in the bush behind them when the servant was not looking. When the man carried away the *zen* and the food that Pinklie and Ray had left, Nellie and Jim surprised and delighted the other two by a present they had brought to each one. Pinklie's was a London dressed doll, and Ray's a tiny music box that played two tunes. They would have been astonished to have known that the servant told the little Japs, when he came out, that the doll was an "English god and the box a machine that sang the prayers to it." He did not know "Auld Lang Syne"

and "Money Musk," but Ray knew this music box was *his* and that was enough. Then with a queer smile that Jim afterwards used to call his "petrified grin," the servant gently said, "I tink you better go home now, you stay long enough." So he politely held open the green gate, and they went home to tell their mother all they had seen.

"Oh, Mamma," cried Nellie, "you would have to hug Pink Lily, and the little brother is sweet enough to eat!"

"That," said Jim, "was just what Lily feared when you kissed her. I saw she expected that you were going to bite her."

Mrs. Howard listened a while and then sent them away to Miss Grey, their governess. It was a pity, but the children's mother was a rather silly woman, provoked that she had to live in Japan, for she cared for nothing but dress, fashion and card parties. She knew what Christian people believed, but in reality she was more worldly, less sensible and cared less about living up to the best that she knew than the Japanese woman next door whom she called a "heathen."

It was well for the children that Miss Grey was a Christian lady, and a loving conscientious one, who wanted to help any who were "ignorant or out of the way." She it was who now explained to the children that the Japanese were a polite and a civilized nation, but were not yet a Christian people;

however, if all who knew the truth would help to make them such, they would find them a people easy to teach and readier to drop their false religion than almost any other superstitious race. She told Nellie that if she lived long by Pinklie they could learn each other's language—she herself meant to learn Japanese —then Pinklie might share their lessons and come to know the Bible and its blessed truths.

Nellie agreed to this with much interest, but thinking about the good that she might do, she got a little self-righteous and began to think of herself as better than Pinklie, whom Mrs. Howard had just called "a little heathen."

A day or two after that, the green gate was opened for Pinklie, with Ray toddling after her, to return the Howards' visit. They were in their very best silks and sashes and looked like beautiful tropical flowers, or so Miss Grey thought. The Howard garden had been neglected and was not pretty, but the children were much interested in the playthings. Their own were so light, being often made of paper, that these heavy dolls and tin engines seemed as strange to Pinklie as did the big, clumsy European beds, chairs and tables.

Then, of course, they also had afternoon tea, which the servant watched from the home-side of the green gate. Miss Grey presided and sent Jim, somewhat later, over to him with a lot of nice things which he tasted, coughed over, and, like Jim, secretly threw

away—careful not to leave where they could poison the family bull-frog. He had no opinion of foreign edibles. But Pinklie picked up the frosted cakes in her dainty fingers, and nibbled with her tiny white teeth in the squares of sweet chocolate.

It was soon after that when, what seemed to these small Japs, a very strange and dreadful thing happened. Like too many brothers and sisters, American as well as English, Jim and Nellie were sometimes given to sudden squabbles, scuffles and lively discussions that seemed to outsiders more serious quarrels than they often were. Nellie had started to show the visitors a plaything which they were a little afraid of anyway: a mechanical bear, that if wound up could walk and growl. Ray began to shiver before its key appeared, then Jim declared that Nellie never wound it tight enough, and tried to seize the bear. Nell screamed and snatched it back; both began to talk at the top of their strong English voices and Jim even struck his sister. It was half fun with him, but Nellie was really angry. Now, Japanese children never quarrel like that. Pinklie thought that one would certainly kill the other, and, perhaps turn on her. She caught up little Ray, and tossing him in place on her back, Jap fashion, she scampered through the green gate as fast as her burden would permit. Once safe on the outside, Ray slid down on his own feet and both darted toward the house door, their bright silk robes puffed out like gay butterflies on the wing.

"What is the matter," stammered Jim, "did they see a dragon cat?"

"Why! where have they gone?" cried Nellie, even more surprised.

"I think," said the governess, "that they fled, scared half out of their wits, because the gentle little creatures never saw a quarrel before. When heathen children are so polite, it seems a pity to teach them this sort of thing."

Jim sheepishly declared that he "was not really mad, only Nell was so obstinate."

Nellie blushed, remembering how good she had felt herself when compared with little Pink Lily. She was more ashamed afterwards, for it took a week of much coaxing and kindness before they could get the small Japs to play with them again. However, when a few weeks had gone by, the four children had become fast friends. Mrs. Howard paid one ceremonious visit to Pinklie's mother, admired her house, her pretty dresses and the tasteful way that she adorned the rooms with flowers; then, her curiosity satisfied, she cared no more about her. Miss Grey learned Japanese with and from the children and the servant, and after a while from Pinklie's mother. Pink Lily had an illness, and the governess cured her with some small sweet medicines, and after that the mother thought her very wise and good, which she really was.

The years come and go as quickly in Japan as they

do elsewhere, and when Pink Lily was fourteen years old she had learned from Miss Grey all that she could teach her about our Lord Jesus Christ and his life mission; she had, too, a Bible, which she could read very well.

Pinklie's mother was very religious, after her fashion. In one room of her house was a shrine with a shelf called "The shelf of the August Spirits," and here the family worshiped their ancestors and kept a light burning and put fresh flowers in vases. Such respect did the family have for this shrine that Miss Grey had thought it wise to say nothing against it at first, knowing that if she offended them in so doing they would not let her teach Pink Lily the truth, which in time would surely dispel the false. Still she took no pains to keep Pink Lily from knowing her disbelief in everything connected with this shrine where the poor mother daily prayed that her ancestors would "grant life without sorrow."

But "sorrow" was just what God sent this loving mother for her own good. About the time Pink Lily was old enough to have her hair done up in the elaborate fashion of young girls, little "Ray of the Sun" fell very ill. He was not eight years old yet, but was so wise, obedient and loving that his name grew more appropriate every day. Now he tossed in pain on his mat and begged for "water"—"water," never once forgetting to thank them for it in a soft voice, growing weaker and weaker until the fifth day, when with a

little sigh, he gave up his life. His mother was frantic with grief. She was fond of her daughter, but she idolized her little son, and now in secret she mourned, and more than once was almost of a mind to commit suicide. The Japanese take their own life much oftener than the people of other lands. Then she decided to wait until the last night of the great "*Bonka*" or festival of the dead, which foreigners call the "Feast of Lanterns."

This festival is held from the thirteenth to the fifteenth of July. Then before every shrine and altar are put new rice mats and lotus flowers, real or paper. During three days feasts are spread for the dead, who are supposed to come back if their living relatives have honored them; torches burn before houses, or along the shore, and beautiful paper lanterns are everywhere lighted at dark, making the cemeteries wonderfully bright. At sunset of the last night all the people swarm into the temples where the priests go through their mummeries. During this festival Pinklie helped her mother decorate the home shrine and her little brother's tomb with the gay lanterns he had liked when alive. They offered there the richest viands, going from temple to temple and shrine to shrine, where the mother always prayed, but where Pinklie only wept. For some reason she could not say a prayer.

On the evening of the third day there is a ceremony which the Japanese think beautiful and holy, but

which Christians find terribly sad. It is to them a comfortless delusion. Friends of the dead prepare a little boat of close-woven barley straw; in it they put dainty food, pretty lanterns and written messages of love and farewell. One lantern is lighted at the prow and incense is burning at the stern. In this boat must go away into darkness the spirits that during the festival have come back to visit unseen their dear ones. Down to the brink of the rapid river went Pinklie and her poor mother, and in that mother's heart was a dreadful purpose. Just before the little craft bearing the spirit of her son should disappear, she meant to fling herself into the dark river, and so go to be with him in some unknown region, if perhaps she might find him.

Pinklie lighted the lantern at the prow and launched the boat; the tears streamed down her cheeks as she watched it grow smaller and smaller among a thousand others, all whirling out of sight. Then a strange experience came to Pinklie and she suddenly flung both arms tightly about her mother, who, all unknown to the girl, was that moment about to leap into the water. She felt as if she were flooded with sunshine so bright that it made all the tiny twinkling river-lights as nothing.

"Oh, mother," she cried, "little brother is not out there alone in the darkness! He is with the good Jesus, who said, 'Suffer the little children to come unto me.' There is no night where he is, no pain and no tears.

You know father says that 'Jesus is greater than Buddha.' It all comes to me now, and it is true—it is true!"

"Ray is not away out now?" said the trembling woman, staring down the river. It was so dark in the distance, while Pink Lily's arms felt warm, and her voice was full of joy.

"No! No! Come home, mother, and let me read you of the place where he is, from Miss Grey's holy book."

The mother was worn out with the excitement of the last three days and now sorely needed comfort. She let Pinklie lead her back to the house and made no protest when the young girl snatched the light from the ancestral shrine, leaving it in darkness. Then, kneeling by a *zen* which held both light and Bible, Pinklie read about the Father's house "of many mansions," about the New Jerusalem where God "shall wipe away all tears," and last of all, she read the story of Lazarus.

Her delight was so great, her understanding and reception of the truth so complete, that she carried her mother along with her in the sincerity of her own enthusiasm. For years, Miss Grey had been trying to show her that Jesus was the Light of the World, but while the Light had shone in the Darkness, she had until now "comprehended it not," as the Bible says. Now that she understood how "In Him is Life and the Life is the Light of men," she seemed to

her tired and bewildered mother full of warmth, light and comfort.

It was a good while before the woman fully understood the truth as Pinklie knew it, but not long before she ceased even decorating the family shrine; although out of "respect to their ancestors" the father wished it to be left.

Pinklie's father declared that the "Jesus woman," as he called Miss Grey, had "bewitched" his wife and daughter; but he never shut the green gate, and when both declared their intention of deserting forever the Shinto temple and going only to the church of the Christians, he smiled—a Japanese smiles whatever happens. He may have been pleased and he may not; but his was a happy home from that time on and the governess learned one day how her "holy book" had kept Ray's mother from suicide.

BLACK OR WHITE?

A TALL graceful girl stood at a schoolroom window, looking down on the playground. She wore a neat gingham dress, and her collar, cuffs and white apron were spotless. There was not in all the school a neater, better-mannered girl than Martha Nelson; but we must add that there was not a more unhappy one. She was the eldest of five children, and her mother was a hard-working widow, respected by all who knew her. Summers, Martha also worked at any honest labor in order to help her mother; but the girl had a good mind and was very desirous to get an education so that she might become a teacher. For this reason she made every exertion to stay in school during the winter. At this time, Martha saw nothing out of the window; she was listening to a conversation which was intended for her ears, and she knew it.

"All our seats are to be changed to-day," said Nellie Gates.

"Well, if I am put next to—you know who, I won't come to school another day. I will not sit with any 'nigger'!" exclaimed Irene Shaw.

"Hush!" whispered Mary Miller.

"I won't 'hush'; don't care if she does hear. You sit with her, if you want to; as for me, I think there ought to be separate schools for that sort of people. Next year I am going to a 'finishing school,' so I don't care."

"It is no use to make a fuss," said Kate Howard, "this is a free school."

"Well, if it is, I would not stick myself in where I was not wanted," persisted Irene. "I suppose she will graduate some day, will stand up in a white cotton gown, with the rest of you, and wear your class pin." Then Irene gave that sneering laugh which so tries a school girl's soul, if given at her expense.

"If she does," maintained Mary Miller, "I will wager anything that she will have the best essay of any in the lot. There is not one of us to-day who writes half as good a composition as she does."

"Gets it out of some old book, no doubt," returned Irene. Then the bell for order stopped all conversation before Mary could say another word.

Now, you know Martha's trouble. She had intellect, fine perceptions, was sensitive and warm-hearted, but she had a black skin. In the grammar school she had gotten along all right; the little girls liked her, for she was kind and did nice things for them; while the boys, rough as they often were, scorned to insult Martha as had these would-be young ladies of a higher school grade. They might never have done

this but for Irene Shaw, the petted daughter of parents with more money than good sense. The teachers were all kind to Martha, and her classes would have been delightful to her if the girls had not treated her as if she were a leper or afflicted with some contagious disease.

Martha stood it all for weeks, but this day her patience almost gave out and she said to herself, "After all, I am only a 'nigger'! Fifty years hence the colored people may have earned a place for themselves; but now, perhaps, I had better give up trying to get an education. The State gives it free to me, and I have hoped God meant me to help other poorer colored girls down South, but I can't stand this much longer. I believe the whippings in slavery times that father used to tell about would not have hurt me more than Irene Shaw hurts me when she tries."

The next day was a beautiful September day, but the attendance at school was rather small. The reason was evident: it was the day of the annual County Fair in the village of Elmwood. However, as a reward for the faithfulness of those who did not desert the school, the afternoon exercises were shortened. All the boys rushed away to the Fair Grounds, while the girls preferred to saunter slowly through the principal streets of the usually quiet town, now all alive with country people, peddlers, street shows, and of course, on the green, a merry-go-round.

A narrow river ran right through the town. Over it was an old-fashioned, clumsy wood and iron bridge, with heavy arches dividing the sides for pedestrians from the middle for wagons and horses. When a half dozen of the school girls came into the main street they saw all the crowd moving toward this bridge; next they learned that a rope walker was advertised to cross the river just there, on a rope stretched from the upper window of one warehouse to another on the opposite bank. Of course, the bridge itself was the best place from which to see the gymnastic performances promised.

"Come, girls! Let us get a good standing-place there," proposed Irene Shaw, issuing from a confectioner's with her hands full of candy. This she generously shared with the other girls, for in ways like this she retained her popularity. Not to belong to her "set" was to lose a great deal in more ways than one.

Down the street went the merry group, seeing, as girls do see, something funny at every step. Reaching the bridge, they found it black with people. Young farmers had driven their teams on it—two restless horses wore the "first premium" ticket by their ears. Men and boys leaned, clung or climbed on the arches, while the side passages were packed with women and children.

"Let us wedge ourselves in on the right side," said Irene, as usual, going ahead herself, while she ex-

plained rather too openly, "these country girls and their beaux are so ridiculous in their queer finery, it is fun to watch them!"

The rumor went around that the gymnast was to start in just two minutes, when suddenly Martha Nelson also pushed her way to the place gained by her schoolmates and, grasping Irene's arm rather unceremoniously, she exclaimed, "Come right off! Come *this minute!* Doctor Porter says the bridge may not stand the weight!"

"Let go my arm this instant, Martha Nelson! I would thank you to mind your own business; when I need——"

Just then a loud shout went up. A slim fellow in tights appeared; he took two steps. What he did next no one ever knew.

All the people on the bridge swayed toward the side of that warehouse, stretching up their necks to see a human being aping a monkey. There was a horrible tearing and rumbling, then a crash, as of splitting and falling timber. One shriek of common terror, breaking into continuous wails and yells. The air and river seemed for one moment full of writhing shapes. The old bridge had collapsed, letting down men, women and children to be crushed by irons, to be drowned, to be trampled by the frantic horses.

To Martha that scene always afterward came back like some frightful nightmare. One moment she stood in the sunshine, seeing the angry color deepen

in Irene's pink cheeks as she flung off Martha's eager hand so scornfully. The next, they were both a part of the struggling fighting mass of wounded people, broken planks and fragments of iron. Blood was pouring down from Martha's head, for it had been badly bruised; but her strong arms were free, and the first person she saw was Irene Shaw, so nearly under a horse made wild with pain that he must have crushed her in another second, if Martha had not wrenched her away with an energy that tore her free from much of her clothing. A faintness like death then began to creep over her, but, dying, as she thought herself, Martha still kept above the water the beautiful golden head of the unconscious Irene, and with her clung to a fragment of a shattered arch from which others, crazed with fear, would have torn them. Those who were in the middle of the bridge were dead, or dying, before the townspeople could rescue them. Two of Irene's schoolmates were taken out lifeless; another had a scar she would carry through life. But the first strong man that reached Martha received from her Irene, senseless but unhurt; for as he afterwards declared, "The nigger saved her —I saw it from the bank!"

For several weeks Martha was very ill, and the doctor thought she might have received some lasting injury to the brain, but God had work for that same brain to do among the people of Martha's race, and so one day she came back to a full

realization of life and all that life meant. She showed the fact by looking with a troubled face on a great dish of splendid white grapes on the table near her bed.

"Mammy, dear, you must be starving yourself to afford me fruit like that!"

Now, mammy, although a kind and faithful soul, had never gone to any High School nor studied any grammar, so what she said between smiles and tears was: "Laws, no, dearie! Miss Irene done fetched dem, and all dat rich soup and jell and big roses, such as folks carry to grand 'ceptions. She send a fat ole doctor, too, and say it ain't gwine to be none of our business wat he ax for his fessional services. Dat gal, once so pert and sassy, she can't be too tankful dat you save her life. She akcherly say tother day that she was jes a light and trifflin' no-account critter compared to you; or dat was the upshot of her remarks;" then seeing the wonder in Martha's thin face, she added, "I reckon her heart is a heap sight softer fer dat smashing she escaped."

Mammy Nelson's last utterance was as true as peculiar, and, even while she was talking, Irene appeared at the door of the neat little cabin. She went quickly over to the bed and holding Martha's black hand in her little white one, she asked, "Will you forgive all the mean and hateful things that I have done and said about you? When you come back to school, we girls are pledged to show you how

proud we are of you! People saw you that day in the water and they say that you are a heroine!"

"Nonsense, Miss Irene, I am just a black girl, without much wool on the scalp where my wool ought to grow," said Martha, trying to laugh lest she cry so she could not stop.

"Nebber you fear, chile, de doctor say your wool comin' in all right," said her mother.

Irene still held Martha's hand, waiting to hear her say that she forgave her, but the most that Martha said was, "Let us forget it all, Miss Irene, that is a good way."

"Not for *me*, I need to remember how kind and patient you have been."

Irene was young and she had a strong will; now that she had seen the folly of looking at the skin rather than the heart of another, she became herself far more worthy of love and respect. Martha went back to school; she even graduated and had a "class ring." Her dress would have been very cheap and coarse, if white, but about that Irene and she had a friendly squabble (the only sort they ever again had), and with Mammy Nelson to persuade her, Martha's dress was a gift from Irene, who, by the way, never went to the "finishing school." She came to realize that at nineteen she was only beginning to learn life's lessons.

HOW MAGDA SAVED CARL,

OR

THE "WEIBERTREUE."

THE southern part of Germany has lovely forests, vine-covered hills, picturesque ruins and quaint cities. But no relic of the past is more humanly interesting than one old, old castle of the "*Weibertreue,*" or as it might be translated—of woman's faithfulness. Better still, its story, unlike many Rhine legends, is true history. A traveler stopping to-day at Heilbrun, in Wurtemburg, would learn of the good missionary Kilian, who came there in the year 680 and preached the gospel of Christ, and how the people far and wide embraced the truth, being then baptized in a sparkling fountain near by, called the *Heiligenbrunnen*, or Holy Well. Then, if one could walk a few miles, he should start out on the long white road which winds through a wonderfully beautiful country to ancient Weinsberg, a quiet dreamy town at the foot of the castle. Its buildings curve around the hill like an amphitheater and the place is full of middle-age curiosities. A footpath

leads up the soft green grass under great over-arching trees, where often the nightingales sing—up to a great tower and all that is left of a huge pile of buildings which date back to Roman times. Climbing the tower and looking over the exquisite valley and the faint blue hills, the visitor can recall a beautiful story and even fancy that he sees it enacted before his eyes.

In the twelfth century there lived in this Castle of Weinsberg a beautiful duchess, Uta, wife of a certain Duke Welf. This duke had received the castle with his bride as her marriage portion from her father, who was a Rhenish Palgravine, and very dear had it become to him and to his wife. Now, although the people had been Christianized for centuries, the poor among them were grossly ignorant, and many foolish legends and worse superstitions had been interwoven with religion, as understood by the rich, for neither rich nor poor had the Scriptures in their language, even had they known how to read, which few did know. But one grand thing about our holy religion is its power to work wonderful results against the greatest disadvantages. Even at this time, many of the people well understood that our Blessed Lord and Saviour came to earth to save sinners, to teach men how to live and, above all, to love. So, in spite of great ignorance, there were many whose faith was strong and whose lives were conformed to the Bible teachings. There were also good and bad teachers.

The Duchess had been blessed with a learned and devout old man whose prayers and Scripture lessons sank deep into her heart, making her a noble character.

When Uta came as a bride to the old castle, she found that which had once been a chapel, later had been used as an armory, where the weapons of the Duke and his knights were kept, for they were of a warlike race and the times were times of constant conflict. Uta had the chapel cleared and set about to restore and beautify it, neglecting not in the meantime to have there every day prayers and the chanting of some of the glorious old hymns which we sing even to-day; they being too sacred to perish.

Now, all below the castle and the tiny hamlet, then nestling at its base, were the dense woods full of wild animals. There the nobles hunted and there the foresters felled huge trees which, when cut, made fuel for vast fireplaces in the castle rooms. Among these wood-cutters was one very strong and unusually intelligent man who, with his son and one daughter, lived in a little cabin on the confines of the forest. Carl, a hearty fellow of fifteen, used to help his father in the woods, while Magda, only about a year younger, took the place of her dead mother, so far as doing any work in the simple little cabin; but just how simple that work and way of living was we can scarcely imagine. A few skins to cover them, if cold, did for a bed, and a few rude dishes with a pot in

which to cook their food, if cooked it was, about made up the sum of their household furniture—save for a trifle or two that Magda had made in imitation of things seen in the castle kitchen. Oh, yes! Not to be forgotten was a sort of bench or chair of twisted wood which Carl had fashioned for his father. The boy delighted in handicraft of that kind, but he had never seen much and had no teaching therein

Now it happened one lovely summer day that the forester and his son were felling a monstrous oak, but they had not reached that stage in the work when they expected the tree to fall. Just before they might have looked for that and so taken care to stand away, they heard down the long forest aisles the baying of hounds and the horns of the hunters. They knew that in a moment a hunting party from the castle might sweep by—lords and ladies on the splendid horses that Carl loved to watch, for they saw few sights in their monotonous life. So absorbed did they become that they forgot to watch the swaying oak, which suddenly came thundering to the earth, knocking Carl senseless and killing outright his father. The accident happened just as the hunters swept into sight and saw what had occurred. In that rude age the misfortunes of the poor were often of no consequence to the rich; but the Duchess was compassionate; she had seen rosy-cheeked Magda and had spoken kindly to the peasant maiden, so now

she ordered all done that could help Carl, who was evidently most injured in his legs.

They carried him and his lifeless father back to the cabin where poor Magda awaited their homecoming and marveled at sight of the crowd she saw approaching.

That night the Duchess sent food and comforts from the castle with the old man who acted as surgeon after the conflicts which were often taking place between her followers and their foes. But little was known in that age of setting bones properly or of treating wounds. Carl might have regained the use of both legs if rightly treated; but between the surgeon's ignorance and his contempt for a patient who was nothing but a peasant, the young fellow was left a cripple for life, only able to drag about slowly, and wholly unfit for his former work.

After their father was buried the Duchess did not forget them. She let Magda come daily to the castle to learn the work of a maid, earning in this way enough to feed them both, and allowing her to run down the hill to stay with Carl at night. But Carl could not be idle. At first he made snares and traps to catch wild animals, then he tried his hand at rude wood carvings, and after a while he did something which when shown by Magda to the Duchess gave her a new idea. She had been seeking for a workman to carve the ends of the seats in her chapel, for according to the quaint fashion of that day, she wished them to

represent the heads of beasts or of grotesque creatures, unlike anything on land or sea. She had one skilled workman already engaged, and when he had given Carl a trial he accepted him as a pupil and a helper in the chapel decoration.

Carl had never been so happy before in all his life; he had found his place, and so long as his hands were thus pleasantly at work he cared little that his legs were distorted and half useless. He stayed now at the castle all the time and saw his well-loved sister many times a day. He came to love the old chapel too, and to delight in its restoration; next he wanted to know the significance of all the symbols that he saw there, and he asked questions about the service itself. Soon instead of idling any of his time on the walls or gossiping with the servants and soldiers, Carl lingered in some shadowy corner when the prayers and praises so loved by the Duchess were going on. What did they mean? Magda asked the old priest, Father Anselmo, who was glad to find anyone willing to be taught. Men, in those days, thought far more of fighting than of anything else, and considered religion something to be attended to only in the hour of death. But Father Anselmo was a true Christian, and all that he told Carl the boy took into his heart, until the old man confided to the Duchess that but for the boy's deformity he would make a priest of him, for all religious teachers were called priests in those days. Carl had nothing in common with the rough men

around him, and so he came to make his sister more of a comrade, and often she wondered where he got his fancies of the angels whose lovely faces he began to carve.

Now, at the best, those were rude and warlike days, when too often might made right. This last was soon seen when, with no reason that would have stood in the law of later times, the Emperor Konrad laid claim to the town and to the castle, which he coolly announced he had already given as a present to a certain Duke Frederick.

Duke Welf, the rightful owner of both town and castle, refused to surrender either, and so the angry Emperor appeared with his troops to demand both and to punish Welf. With him came Duke Frederick and an army which surrounded the castle first and then besieged it. In the first attack Duke Welf fell wounded. Before that, of course, all the well-born inhabitants and all the humblest people, too, of the little town had gathered within the castle precincts. When their food would be exhausted all must be at the mercy of the foe, a foe cruel, relentless and powerful. To surrender the castle meekly and at once, seemed soon the only thing to be done, for the all-powerful Emperor sent this word to Duke Welf and to his Duchess: "Yield yourselves at once, or you all perish, without grace and without mercy."

Now the German women of that day were not weak, either in mind or body, and the Duchess, seeing the

despair of her wounded husband, summoned to meet her every lady in the castle walls. Telling them then that the Emperor was not waging war on women and children and, so might, after all, not be utterly without pity, she proposed that a few of them go down with her to the enemy's camp, where face to face with the Emperor she would plead for her people and her castle. One and all gladly agreed to go; so selecting her companions, Uta led them down the hill to the royal pavilion, where she presented their petition with all the eloquence at her command. The Emperor met them courteously and, as Uta had said, assured them that he "warred not with women and young children." Moreover, he declared that "every wife, mother or daughter, from town or castle, might the next day come forth to safety from the great gates," each bringing with her all of her treasures that she could carry—gold, silver, jewels, or what not, so it was precious to her. But alas! alas! although the sentence was unspoken by the courteous monarch, every woman knew that her husband or her lover or her brother, each and all alike were doomed. Once let the helpless ones be outside those castle walls, and then death awaited the noble Duke and his faithful knights.

Was it any wonder that the lovely, golden-haired Uta turned sorrowfully homeward with her little band of weeping ladies? Still as she went she prayed and pondered; for she was one of those gracious

women of whom old King Solomon wrote, "The heart of her husband doth safely trust in her" and to-day on those ruined castle walls, you can read, cut in stone, the inscription to her memory: "*Ihres Mannes Herr darf sich auf sie verlassen.*"

While the Duchess was in the valley doing her best to save the people, those left behind had many of them gathered in the chapel and prayed with Father Anselmo for God's help; but when she returned to repeat the Emperor's direful message there was loud wailing and many tears among the women; the strong men were silent, only gazing sadly on their dear ones. Magda loved the poor crippled Carl as well as any high-born sister could have loved a noble brother, and now she valued her life but little if she was to leave him to meet death in the castle; but when she found the lad gazing off in the sunset light over the valley where the enemy was encamped to the beautiful hills glorious in the after glow, he talked as he never had talked before, and others besides Magda were astonished at the words of the peasant boy. Life was short at the best, he said, and death came to all, but if they were sure of God's forgiveness and knew that they loved their Saviour, why were they so cast down? Then he told them of the martyrs and the saints about whom he had lately learned from Father Anselmo—how some of them had welcomed death.

"That is all well enough for a cripple or a priest," muttered a rough soldier, "but we like life!" Another

assured the old man that a priest would escape unless killed by mistake, so to avoid that he would "do well to accompany the women when they went." Father Anselmo sternly reminded them that his place was with the dying, where he might be needed. But while most persons in the castle were crushed or purposeless, Uta, the brave young Duchess, conceived a plan that seemed an inspiration from Heaven, which it indeed may have been. It was almost midnight when once again she called the women together, this time collecting every one, old or young, rich or poor, strong or weak, and to them she told her purpose, bidding them hope and above all to pray. That must have been, save for the innocent little children, a sleepless night in the old castle, for each woman was getting ready the treasure she was to carry down to safety. Then came the fateful morning. Perhaps it was a lovely Spring day, when birds sang, trees were pink with bloom, and all the soft Swabian land seemed flooded in sunshine—peaceful, too, as yet, though in the valley there just below them camped Konrad, the Emperor, and that haughty Duke Frederick, who glanced now and then up at the lordly castle so soon to be his own. Little cared he for the possible bloodshed or what crime and suffering might come first.

The soldiers of the Emperor were drawn up at last in battle array, their banners floating in the breeze. All were waiting for the procession of women to come

down, then, the way once cleared of them and their possessions, every soldier of Konrad was ready to make the mad onset, to possess the castle, to begin the bloody work. Just inside those walls meanwhile, there was a strange gathering of women who awaited with fast beating hearts the first loud blast of the trumpet call—their order to come out.

It came; slowly the great gates uplifted and first, by reason of her rank, came forth the Duchess Uta; then behind her in due order, a long, slow train of women. The Emperor had said, "You may take with you all that you can carry of your treasures"—and so had they done. Beneath the burden of her wounded husband staggered the beautiful Duchess, and after her by each woman was carried the man she loved. Where there were women too frail for their burdens, some poorer sister, who had no son nor brother, gladly lent her broad shoulders to the noble task. So down the hill came the long procession, the women and their treasures.

The astonished Emperor's heart was stirred. The outwitted Duke was wild with rage. He shouted madly, "This was not the compact!" But Konrad, perhaps with eyes grown dim at thought of some woman who loved him, shouted as loudly, "A King's word is not to be broken!"

He had told the women to save that which was most precious, and they had done just that. So now the music ceased, the soldiers held back until the last

came down, and this last of all, because the humblest in rank, was Magda the peasant maid with her crippled brother Carl; and thus were all alike safe, both the men as well as all the women of old Weinsberg. Then, better than his word, the Emperor gave order that the gold, silver, jewels or other belongings of each and every woman there that day should be given to her. This was the way that long ago, those brave Swabian women who did what love prompted them to attempt, won the admiration of their foes and proved that the most unselfish faithfulness ever brings the fullest reward in the end.

A NORWEGIAN INVESTMENT.

Axel Larson was drying hay. He stood in a tiny meadow about as large as a village dooryard. It was late afternoon, so the sun was behind the great mountain that towered up until its rugged top was outlined against a taller one that never took off its snow white cap from year's end to year's end. In front of Axel was the deep fiord, which mirrored everything on the mountain in its still green surface. The little meadow was crossed and recrossed by rail fences, on which Axel hung his hay, and, if you wondered how he happened to have so much, you would have discovered that strong wires ran from his meadow right up in the air to a point on the mountain where was another flat grass-grown spot. There his brother Ivan was at work, binding the cut hay that every now and then went sliding down the stout wires to Axel, who spread it out to dry on the fences. Axel was a strong yellow-haired lad of thirteen, and usually full of life and fun; but to-day he was listless.

Ever since his cousin Lars began to write of the wonderful American cities, of the vast, yellow grain fields of the western States, Axel had been wild to go

to America. There were riches, pleasure and a chance to get on in life. Here in Norway—had not Lars written that they were behind the times? Certainly Lars must know.

Axel had given his parents little peace for six months. His big contented brother said that "Axel ate, drank and dreamed United States," and every day he pinned a little flag, with the stars and stripes, on his coarse jacket. His parents had talked with their good pastor, who had agreed that, while the eldest son was not to be spared, Axel might be sent to his cousin, if only there were money enough; but it would take about one hundred dollars, and that is not so easily raised off a queer little farm where almost everything grows on the perpendicular, and strangers are puzzled to know why the cows and sheep grazing on the hillsides never slip into the fiords.

In summer, Axel's family turned their home into a posting station and earned some money from tourists; but these only came when the midnight sun was at its finest—a period of about six weeks. However, Axel had the promise that when one hundred dollars was raised, without scrimping the family too much, he might go to his cousin.

Axel's home was a neat frame house with a rather flat roof, on which grew wild flowers, in the covering of sod, so put on as to be warm in winter and cool in summer. In the parlor was a gay rag carpet, some chromos, a real hair-cloth sofa and such quantities

of tidies! One fancied the furniture might have suffered from some queer malady and broken out in a violent eruption of white cotton. In the wee kitchen everything was spotless, and Axel's sister Magda was there frying pancakes for a party of hungry Americans in the dining-room.

"They go by the very next boat, Axel," said his busy mother, "and they are so hurried they did not even write their names in the visitors' book."

"That does not matter," said Axel, taking the batter dish from his sister and deftly frying the next lot of cakes, while Magda darted away with the last cooked. When she returned she said: "They are through eating, so go you, Axel, and attend to the bill, for our father is not here."

Axel walked into the dining-room and amused the gentlemen with his business-like gravity. He just glanced at the man's wife and daughter; then, figuring on the bill, he named an amount equal to fifty cents each for the excellent meal they had enjoyed. The gentleman started to exclaim at its cheapness, when Axel cried, misunderstanding his attempt, "You are right, sir! My father says, 'It is not just to charge for food that one has not eaten'; your lady ate no chop, so that takes off something."

"No! no! not a penny less!" protested the man, remarking to his wife, "Well, for quaint honesty, commend me to Norway!" Then, hearing a shrill boat whistle at the wharf, he hastily paid the bill from

a purse fairly bursting with the paper currency of the country, and hurried to the boat landing, followed by his wife and daughter.

Magda, clearing the table, calmly remarked, "How they come and go, round the great mountain by land and over the water, we know not where, but it is likely to lands far away!"

"These go to a land that I wish I might see," said Axel, preparing to eat, with a right hearty appetite, the great pile of cakes left. The whistle blew again.

"They will but just get that boat"—began Axel. Then his eyes fairly started from his head. There at his feet was a roll of bills, light as tissue paper, but all marked with a number of kroners equal to twenty-five dollars each.

"Fly, fly, Axel!" cried Magda. "To the boat, Axel!" and her last word was not out before her brother was tearing like mad toward the landing place. But thought is as quick as lightning. "He is so rich, perhaps he will give me a few kroners." Axel's heart seemed like to burst with the speed he forced himself to make. He passed Carl Neilson—the champion runner of all that region. Should he thrust this money into Carl's hand and shout an order. Carl might get to the boat one minute sooner—but then might not Carl get those kroners? Axel passed him like an arrow shot into space; but Axel was just too late. The steamer was off before he dashed breathless onto the planks of the wharf, to find there only the

usual loafers. They all had noticed the strangers, but not one knew whence they came or whither they went.

At the end of that fiord they might take a route toward Bergen and Scotland, or another toward Christiania and southern Europe.

Axel's first thought was keen regret that he had failed, and then shame that he had not made Carl run, for Carl might possibly have caught that boat. He trudged sorrowfully home to tell his father the whole truth, and his father said: "There is but one thing to do now, my boy; you must go round the mountain by the road on which they came to the last posting station. There they may have registered their names and residence. Then telephone back still farther and ever back; telegraph, if need be, until one finds where the money may be sent. It will cost, this will, but the man must have his own."

"I will pay that cost out of my United States money," sighed Axel.

"Yes, that is just," replied his father; "for I fear that you coveted, my boy."

"Not this money, my father," said Axel, his face red with shame; "but I hoped that—that——"

"That you would be paid for mere honesty. Is that not true?"

Axel nodded. He was glad to start on the road, though no horse could be spared to take him over this sixteen miles up hill and down dale, through pine

forest and by the edge of silent fathomless fiords. While he walked he thought and often prayed. He was comforted to think that he ran his hardest, and probably not even Carl could have got the boat. Then he prayed God to forgive his "meanness," as he called it. All night long he trudged patiently through the sweet-smelling pines or by the water side. It was at no time dark, and after midnight the sky was flushed pink and blue and gold, while all the earth was bathed in that indescribable and exquisite light that does not seem to come from sun nor moon nor stars, but from heaven itself—the light of the land of the midnight sun.

It was a very leg-weary boy who plodded along, for he had already done a hard day's work; but Axel forgot his weariness in thought. In time to come, as he looked back upon the incident, it always seemed to him that he became a man that night in the pine forests. He thought seriously about God and right and human life and man's duty. He recalled his old Lutheran pastor's constant prayer that the children should be "kept from evil," having "pure hearts and clean hands all the days of their pilgrimage"; and he prayed that prayer earnestly for himself.

Having long hills to climb, Axel did not reach the station until four o'clock; then he ate a breakfast, did his best at the telephone, and slept until noon. After that he had a long talk about the strange gentleman with the garrulous hotel clerk, who dearly loved

HE BECAME A MAN THAT NIGHT.

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to gossip; but when he suggested that the stranger would perhaps send Axel a "reward," the boy hotly returned: "I want no pay for doing right, and my father would not let me keep it if it came."

"So, so, my lad! Right you are," said the old man, who had shrewdly guessed at Axel's state of mind, after asking him no end of questions. In the afternoon the boy went home, and during the next week nothing was heard from the tourists. Axel had to pay a good many of his hard-earned kroners for the telephoning that had been done, as no one thought of touching the large notes, which had been put in the care of the pastor of the little hamlet.

One midsummer day, while Axel was hard at work in another hay field, there came a most wonderful epistle to him from Hamburg, where the gentleman was who had lost the money. In some way he seemed to have learned a great deal about Axel, and to know that he wanted to go to the United States. He refused to tell his name and said that he was on a tour of the world, and was to leave Hamburg that very day. Then he declared that he wished to "invest" his hundred dollars just where he had deposited it, or, in other words, he wanted it spent in the "manufacture of a first-class American citizen"; therefore he told Axel's father to send the boy to the West, or, if he thought best to wait, he might put the amount at interest, He emphatically insisted that he was not insulting Axel by paying him for common honesty,

but he was indulging himself in the whim of "speculating" in a lad who must later repay him by helping another boy when the chance came.

Do you suppose Axel was happy? If space permitted, you might learn of the joy in his father's house, of the grief they felt when he had to leave them. He joined his cousin, he learned new ways of farming, and later he had a farm of his own. He made his parents very proud and comfortable in their old age, and, when his brother married, he sent him money enough to buy all the cows and sheep he could take care of; but, best of all, Axel never forgot that he was an "investment" and bound to pay interest. He became a true, patriotic American citizen, a Christian who helped not one but many a poor fellow to help himself.

WHO SENT HASSAN?

In a sunny room overlooking a pretty park sat an invalid girl, and moving about in loving attendance on her wants was another girl, somewhat older, but far more robust in appearance.

"Mary Palmer," said the younger girl, "I have found another trained nurse who is as good as you and even better in her way, for she has had ten times your experience."

"Very well, you saucy young woman. I resign my position to-night. Mrs. Willard wants me at any time."

"Oh, no," laughed Louise Howard, "with all your faults I love you still. Mrs. Willard can't have you, and you will not be jealous when I tell you this trained nurse is for souls, not for bodies."

Miss Palmer, who years before she became a trained nurse had been Louise's friend, looked interested and said, "Tell me about her, do."

"It is Grandmother Howard. Mary, if you ever get 'blue' and want cheering or help, go to her. When I tell you that I ache all over, am hot, nervous and can't rest anywhere, you always make me cool and

peaceful and banish my unreasonable pains. Well, she does the same thing for me spiritually. Yesterday I told her what I have said to you, that I do not want to die so young. All my life I have just been getting ready to live. What is the good of this education I can never use? I have tried to be helpful at home and do well at school, but that is not really doing any special good or work in the world. Grandmother and I have had a secret together ever since I was a little girl, when she told me of the heathen in foreign lands. I said then I meant to be a missionary, and, Mary, I never have given up that idea. I did not talk much of it—never to people in general, for it was not time, and they might suppose I considered myself very good."

"All the same I guessed your purpose long before you told me. You showed your love and zeal too plainly for secrecy," commented Mary, leaving unsaid her afterthought, "and you have been a lovely earnest Christian if ever I saw one."

"Why! did you know it always?" asked Louise, her large dark eyes full of enthusiasm. Then she was silent, adding later a little sadly, but quite patiently: "Now, for three months or more I have seen Doctor James losing hope that I should get well. His words were encouraging, but his eyes are too honest for any self-deception on my part, so, yesterday I had to tell grandmother that it seemed strange and hard to me that God should have let me get ready for

a life that he meant to take away from me and allow me to get full of interest in a work I never was to do. Grandmother cried a little with me—she could not help it; but she was not at all perplexed as to the 'why' of it, and some way she made it seem right, even to me. This is God's world and God's work and God's workers can be everywhere that he plans to have them, and it may be he wants them in heaven when they fancy they are to stay on earth; but the best is to be where he means to have them. All we have to do is to trust him, and when she made that clear, I lost all my 'blue' feeling and uneasiness."

Tears were gathering in Mary Palmer's eyes while she listened, for only two years before she had seen Louise, one lovely June day, graduate from a woman's college with the highest honors of all in her class, a strong girl full of noble ambitions, one who seemed born to lead and to influence others.

Just then Doctor James, Louise's physician, made his appearance, and calling Miss Palmer, gave her directions about a new medicine. When he had gone, Louise said, cheerfully: "The doctor called me 'saucy,' exactly as you called me so; for when he said I looked unusually bright, I told him it was grandmother's skill, not yours or his. But he admitted that grandmothers were great institutions, and said that Thackery said we should each take care of our own as 'we would never have any others.' Doctor James is full of fun."

"Yes, I must talk to Grandmother Howard; perhaps she will do me good," returned Miss Palmer.

It was a half hour later when Louise, who had been studying her book shelves, spoke again.

"Molly, dear, when I am g——, some day I want you to select from my favorite books any that you want. We have read so many of them together. Take fiction, poetry, anything you like. Keep my Testament, my Thomas à Kempis, and this little book I have used for years. Tom picked it up one day lately and asked if it was a 'pious crazy-quilt design.'"

Miss Palmer, to hide her emotion, examined the book Louise held toward her, smiling half tearfully. It was a collection of Scripture verses called Heavenly Light on Earthly Pathways, and every few pages apart Louise had glued in beautiful poems, inspiring words of great writers, rare old hymns, here and there marked by a golden pansy or a still fragrant rose leaf.

"It is a condensed Bible, Mary. I call it my heart's-ease book. That is why so many violets are used for marks. I really believe from the Scripture in it, an ignorant person could get all the light needed to guide him to heaven."

Louise lingered through the summer until the first red leaves began to flutter earthward. Then before the autumn days were over she "flitted," as the Scotch say, to a fairer land than ours.

. . . . . .

It was midwinter two years after Louise Howard

went away from earth, but the reader must not picture any scene of snow and ice. Imagine instead a broad sunlit river having on one side gleaming stretches of what literally were "Afric's golden sands." On the other bank were vivid green bean fields in blossom, groves of palm, gum arabic and pepper trees, with here and there between them creaking water wheels.

A steamer from Cairo had come to anchor at this point on the Nile in order to let a tourist party visit a ruined temple several miles inland. Among these travelers was Mary Palmer, who had come thus far from home as companion to a wealthy invalid. That afternoon she had wandered in amazement through a temple built before Moses pleaded with Pharaoh—one built in fact by that Pharaoh's father. As she gazed at the great walls covered with symbols of a long-forgotten idolatry, for the first time in many weeks her thoughts turned to Louise and her ardent wish to be a missionary.

"If she had lived, perhaps she might have labored in some such place as this," mused Mary, for having fallen behind her companions she found herself following them through a native town of mud hovels whose interior revealed no furnishing but rag heaps, water jars and some rude apparatus for grinding corn. Half-naked children disputed possession with hens and yellow dogs. The narrow lanes between the huts were difficult to traverse by reason of dirt piles, lean donkeys and buffalo cows, but, fortunately, the town was

small, so that soon Mary was again in the open country. She had gone only a short distance when she was startled by a clean brown hand laid on the betasseled head of her patient donkey, while a pleasant voice said: "Please, my lady!"

Looking up, Mary saw a bright olive-skinned young fellow, wearing the red fez of a Turkish subject. His white blouse was clean and his whole appearance attractive. He began very eagerly asking if he could not buy, borrow, or beg something "English" to read, and when Mary was too surprised to answer at once, he promptly took from his garment a Second Reader, exclaiming: "You will see how I know to read all that is here with book—yes, without book!"

And, in truth, he did. Mary kindly explained that she had no books with her, only a guide book and a few old newspapers; but he begged to go with her to the steamer while she searched, or, as he said: "You will please look, lady, and God go with you." So he ran by her side, polite, yet persistent, telling her that he "must learn more English."

It came out that he had once attended a mission school "up the river," but his father forbade his going any longer.

"Well, I shall have to give you my guide book for Egypt," laughed Mary, at last.

"Anything! anything English, lady," he responded, eagerly, and soon they reached the boat, whose bell was loudly ringing, in token of speedy departure.

A PLEASANT VOICE SAID: "PLEASE, MY LADY."

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THE NEW YORK
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ASTOR, LENOX AND
TILDEN FOUNDATIONS.

Mary hurried to her stateroom. Not a stray book or forgotten magazine was there. She disliked to give away her Baedeker's Guide. Suddenly her glance fell on faded, gilded pages and the words, Heavenly Light on Earthly Pathways, and a thrill went over her with the thought: "That book of Louise's! I will send it where she could not go herself; she would be glad."

Out she hurried, having just time to cross the gang-plank, to thrust it into the young fellow's outstretched hands. He bowed low with oriental grace, and clasped it to his breast.

When the plank was drawn on board, and the steamer started, Mary, sitting on deck to watch the sunset, almost reproached herself for her impulsive gift, thinking the book might after all be tossed aside and lost in some dirty hovel when it had been meant for Mary herself. It was like a part of Louise, her prayers, hymns, her faded flowers.

"Well, it is too late for regrets now," reflected Mary, and soon forgot everything else in watching the scenes around her: the far-off ruins of the temple outlined against a sky of turquoise blue, the near low banks, where dark-robed women, bearing water jars on their heads, came down to fill them, and a line of camels behind slowly filed over the sand; then she gazed at the river itself, over which drifted strange sail-boats looking like huge white-winged birds. The rose and gold tints of sunset dyed the placid waters, where long-legged herons stood in the tall dark rushes, and a

group of stately Arabs came down to bathe before they prayed, bowing, kneeling, rising to stretch their arms toward heaven and crying, "*Allah! Allah!*"

But foreign travel was all new and absorbing to Mary Palmer, so that this little incident of one day was soon forgotten. Almost forgotten, too, save by a few near friends, was the short life of Louise Howard, with all its high aims, its earnest yet apparently fruitless efforts. Miss Palmer was older, graver, doing good work faithfully, when one day, years later, she received a foreign letter with a queer pale-green stamp.

She read it with a kind of awe once, twice, and yet again. It was from an English Bible reader in Cairo, who said that he had found her address in a little book which once belonged to one Louise Howard. Then came the story of Hassan, a young teacher of great promise, who, at his death, left this book, given him by a lady, in an Arab settlement on the Nile. Hassan, at the time the book was given him, was strong in the Moslem faith, and more anxious to learn English perfectly, not that he might read the Bible, but solely that he might make money. Every year travel in Egypt increases, so there is more and more a demand for intelligent dragomen or guides able to explain to English or Americans the wonders of that land.

Hassan had a fine mind. After receiving Louise's book, he began at once to study it, and before many months he had mastered and memorized every Scrip-

ture verse, hymn and poem therein. The book proved what its title claimed it to be, and was, indeed, Heavenly Light to a dark soul. Bitter persecution awaited Hassan so soon as he openly proclaimed himself a Christian. His father had disowned him, but he had joined himself at once to the mission workers, lost all his old desire to make money, and had become only eager to win others to Christ. He had started new schools and missions in totally neglected places, and for five years had done work whose influence only eternity could reveal. Now he had gone, but a younger brother, almost equally zealous, had taken up his unfinished task and was teaching Christ Jesus.

Tears fell fast as Mary folded her letter. Louise had, after all, sent out a missionary, and he had sent another. Who knows the end? Truly, "God buries the workman, but carries on the work."

"PRINCE HAL'S" GENEROSITY.

"Now, boys, you know your exact allowance. You can spend just twenty pounds a year, each of you. When I was a lad, I thought myself rich with a sixpence a week to waste. Good morning." Then the boys' guardian opened his office door to intimate that he was done with them.

Hal and Ernest Merriman were orphans in the care of a busy lawyer, who when he found them a good school in an English town, felt that he had done his duty.

"Twenty pounds will do jolly well," said Hal, who always felt rich with an unspent sixpence in his pocket.

"Yes, it is more than most boys have," agreed his brother.

"We have time to see Molly Grey before we go back to school. Poor old soul, how fond she is of us," said Hal. Ernest nodded, and they turned down a lane to one of those English cottages that look so charming, because overgrown with roses and thatched with straw; homes where, if the floor is stone and the thatch leaks, fever and rheumatism afflict the inmates.

The boys found their old-time nurse suffering from an acute attack of the last, and when they questioned her they found she had no medicine, no doctor and insufficient food. Hal was all sympathy, and declared if his mother had lived this would never have happened, and Ernest said the same.

"But don't you ever again worry, Molly! We have got a big allowance out of old Palmer at last. I will give you a pound every month, and Ernest another."

"Oh! 'tis spoiling me you would be; sure that would kape me like a queen, and *less* 'ud do me, boys."

"No, Molly, it is not a bit too much. We are glad to do it for the sake of old times; are we not, Ernest?"

Again the elder brother quietly agreed; but it was all to Hal that Molly poured out her fervid Irish thanks when they bade her good-by and went away.

"What made you so slow?" asked Hal. "Did you begrudge her so much?"

"Not at all; you know I did not, Hal; but I had to calculate for a minute if we could spare so much."

"I never calculate when my heart is touched," said Hal, a little complacently. "I suppose that I am naturally more generous than you are."

His brother only went on to say: "Then we have agreed each to give her twelve pounds a year; Mr. Palmer might not approve, but it is our own, and if it is right, we can do it and still each have eight pounds left."

"*Only* eight!" said Hal, in rather a different tone; "then we give her more than we have ourselves."

"Yes; you were generous," said Ernest simply; "but, if Molly is so poor, mother would have wished us to help her, and I am not sorry that you bound us to do it."

Hal was lost in thought and did not answer.

School life is much the same everywhere. Soon the boys were hard at study and eager for boating and cricket. From the first Hal was popular. He started an account at the pastry cook's and treated the boys to cakes and tarts. He was always ready to lend or to give, and was voted a "jolly good fellow" and named "Prince Hal." The boys would have liked Ernest better if a notion had not got about that he was "tight," although he had the same large allowance as Hal; for Hal had boasted vaguely of their property managed by old Palmer, our lawyer." Now, a pound is just twenty shillings; but when the month ended Hal had but three shillings toward Molly's twelve, and was in debt. When Ernest told him that the sum was due, Hal "wished he never had agreed to give her so much." Indeed he declared that it was far too much. "Molly was an old torment," and the "town ought to care for her." Then he begged Ernest to lend him the pound that time, and before the next he would "manage" some way. He was just a little ashamed when he saw that it swept away all Ernest's allowance and some that he was saving

to buy a new bicycle out of former spending money. The next month it was even worse, for Hal got angry and told Ernest that he must either "support the old pauper himself," or tell her they "could not keep their promise"—adding "But whatever you do, hold your tongue about her, for I never want to hear her name again."

Ernest made a flying visit to Molly to tell her, as tactfully as possible, that his brother must withdraw his offer, but that he would add as much more as he was able to his own gift. The faithful old servant was much worse, and the doctor said she would live only a few weeks. Ernest decided that by greater economy he could give her all the now much-needed help. But to do this he had to endure mortification at school, where the boys nicknamed him "Money-bags."

About a fortnight before the Easter holidays the older pupils devised a delightful scheme and invited the brothers to join in carrying it out. They would charter a small steamboat, invite a favorite teacher for a leader, and then would spend a week in and about the Isle of Wight. The boys were all wild to go, but as the excursion would cost "quite a bit," as the English say, each boy was asked to tell the utmost he could give. Hal led off like a true prince, with his whole month's allowance, then just at hand, and he hinted that Ernest could do the same, if he would. Oh, how Ernest did want to go! He was

not a prig at all; but a wide-awake boy full of fun. God had given him a fine character, or rather with God's help he had come to have a keen sense of honor, and here was almost all his money pledged another way. He was not so strong as Hal; he had studied harder, and no boy among them all longed for the salt-water breezes as poor Ernest now longed. But, at the very best, he could only spare from his supply a third of what Hal had subscribed. When the paper came to him he explained this, and the older boy who had it sneeringly remarked: "Then you don't go half price! Some folks always want a pound's worth for a sixpence;" while the boys standing near tittered.

Ernest kept his temper, but he suffered, as any high-spirited fellow must suffer, while he could not clear himself from the suspicion of stinginess. Hal kept away from his brother, but hoped that he would be forced into going. Hal liked people to be happy, if it was no bother to him.

Easter Sunday came and went; the next morning, bright and early, Hal with the others was up and away; Ernest followed, in time to see the boat push off, with its shouting laughing company, flags flying, music ringing. A strolling band had gone along for their board. He was alone, and so not ashamed of the hot tears that filled his eyes. He was cruelly disappointed to lose the fun, then, too, all at once, it seemed to Ernest that he was going to lose his brother, the only one left to him; for surely Hal

could not have any love for him and act as he was acting. He did not know that just that moment Hal, in all the music and laughter, was not so happy himself. Seeing Ernest standing alone on the dock he suddenly recalled his mother, father, the dear old home and the days when Molly had petted him. What would his mother think of his late treatment of his brother and the old nurse? But Hal was bound to have "some fun," so again he stifled his conscience, and joined the liveliest fellows.

Ernest next decided to get the most out of his solitary holidays that he could. Counting his money, he found enough to take him by a third-class train to a town where were the ruins of a famous castle that he had long wanted to explore. He caught the train and in a half-hour found that he had still a walk of seven miles to the castle, but that seemed nothing to an English boy. It was a lovely warm Spring day, after heavy rains; the way was beautiful. Still Ernest was very warm and quite hungry when he reached the grand ruins, all covered with ivy, and enticing with its many rooms, towers and even ancient dungeons. He found the coolest nook in the old banquet hall and, sitting on the soft turf, ate a hearty lunch that he had brought with him. Had poor Molly, with her rheumatism, been at hand, she would have told him the spot was far too damp and he too warm to rest there; but what boy ever thinks of anything like that? The afternoon was delightful

after all, for he met a pleasant party of young people and joined them in roaming all about, so that when train time came he was astonished at the way the hours had sped.

The next day came a letter from Molly Grey's doctor. The old nurse had gone home, blessing her boys for their great kindness. She had begged the doctor to write them that God would reward them, for He only knew the comfort their gifts had secured to her for the last two months. Before that she had lacked food, fuel and care; since their visit she had had all she needed, but, best of all, was the thought of how her dear boys remembered her. Then the doctor, on his own account, remarked that their gifts must have meant much sacrifice for school boys; but that Hal, about whom Molly was always talking, would never regret his kindness, nor would his brother, whose name he forgot. Now their fund could be discontinued.

"Oh, how glad I am that we did not promise and then fail!" thought Ernest. "She had it all to the last—and now I can show the boys that I am not so mean as they think me."

The next few days went fast enough, for Ernest was planning a treat with the co-operation of the matron of the school. He meant to give the boating party a fine supper the evening after their arrival; for by that time his allowance would be due, and such pleasure he had in planning extra surprises, with a gift for each

fellow as a "favor" by his plate. Now, perhaps Ernest might have been ill any way, but very likely that rest in the damp old castle when so heated was the real cause, but be that as it might have been, before that week ended Ernest was down with fever; Hal came back prepared to bluff it out and tell him what a fool he had been, but he found his brother wildly delirious, and both the doctor and nurse much alarmed. In the days that followed there was plenty of time for Hal to think. First, he found the letter from Molly Grey's doctor, and on the same table was Ernest's little account book, showing that for some months the struggle to pay his own and Hal's fund had swallowed up all his spending money and the bicycle fund besides. Then to think that his last act before this illness was to devise a treat for the fellows that Hal had let call him mean, stingy and old Money-Bags!

Sometimes the best thing that can happen to a human being is to see the depth of meanness, the utmost evil of which that soul is capable; but it is a mighty bitter experience. But those were really the best days in all Hal's past life; for they made him acquainted with his worst self. One night when it was thought that Ernest could not live until day-break, Hal got the boys together, showed them that letter, told them about Ernest's generosity, and confessed that he had, as he bluntly put it, "acted like a hog." Boys love fair play; but they pitied Hal, and

when Ernest grew better all they did to Hal was to drop his title of "Prince" once and forever; but when at last that treat came off, after Ernest was once again up, they showed their approval of him in the heartiest boyish ways. One of them made a speech that was considered very witty. He declared their name for Ernest was Honey-Bag. Much finer wit might not have made Ernest half as happy as he then was, for it was plain that the boys at last understood and liked him. But that was not all; Hal begged his pardon for his meanness, and then some letters passed between Hal and their guardian. For two months after Hal's own allowance was rather short, but on Ernest's birthday, that came soon after his recovery, he had the very wheel on which his hopes had once been set, and Hal had paid in part for it; so, after all, our story had a pleasant ending.

A LITTLE DUTCH SISTER.

THE young girls of Newtown had a missionary society which they thought rather remarkable; it was called "Our Little Sisters Around the World." They gave and sewed for the support of a little girl in a mission school in India; but in order to make their fortnightly meetings more interesting they learned every time something about the life of some girl of their own age in another country. At the February meeting they were told of a girl of Holland, by a lady who had lived in that country. She showed them this picture of Johanna, whose home was near the little town of Brok, said to be the cleanest place in the world. Now Johanna, as you see her in the photograph, is not leaning gracefully against a marble pillar with a guitar in her lap, nor is she arrayed in the dress she wore as a bridesmaid at some friend's wedding. No, she is busily scrubbing the bottom of a copper kettle and wearing her every-day clothes; just a picture of honest work, done in so happy a spirit that you can see the smile on her lips. You may not think that Johanna is pretty, but she has a complexion like a peach, eyes bluer than the usual sky of Holland and

soft yellow hair. Her clothes, too, are whole and spotless, for the kettle being copper, is now almost gold color with its daily scrubbing.

Now if you wish to see how Johanna lives we will follow her home. Is she a heathen? No, indeed, far from it; she knows her Bible as I fear few girls of her age in America know it, even in a missionary society. She has studied it since she began to read; she united with the church when she was thirteen, and she came of a race who have always loved and sometimes died for the truth of the Bible and the right to read it. Is she poor? Not at all: In an old carved wardrobe at home (one that a museum would give many dollars to purchase) she has woollen skirts, embroidered jackets, caps and collars of rare old lace. The things that Johanna values most are articles that her grandmother once owned, so you see fashions do not change in some parts of the world; then, too, Johanna's mother started her a linen chest about as soon as she was born. Every year that gets fuller until she marries.

Now we will follow her home; for she brought her kettle down to the canal. The water is from the Zuyder Zee, and the flat lands that you see are called "polders," being made lands and lower than the sea. All around her are the famous dykes that were made in the time of William, Prince of Orange, in the days of the fearful Spanish wars.

When going home Johanna went up a green lane

with tall trees on one side and a narrow canal on the other, until she came to a street of quaint little houses, each in a sort of toy garden. In these were little flower beds, bordered by small white shells, and in the middle of some were little plaster-of-paris figures or colored glass globes. At the front door stood a row of muddy wooden shoes; for the soil clings to shoes here, and neat people go in their stocking feet, rather than leave a mark on the beautifully clean floor disclosed when the door opens. However, as we follow only in imagination, we are not wearing muddy shoes and will go boldly from the tiny hall into the best parlor. Here is a bright rag carpet, a stand with its crocheted cover, and on it a family Bible, a photograph album and lamp, all familiar enough to us; but not so much so is the carved oak wardrobe we spoke of, and a tall beautiful chair or two; no, nor that long shelf of almost priceless delft, accumulated through the last hundred years and earlier—cups, bowls, queer little pots of various shapes. We think of delft as always blue, but here are yellow and red cups, more like Italian Majolica; it is the delft of long ago.

Now nobody will see if we open this wide closet door. What! Is it not a closet? No, indeed; here is a long bed with a wonderful silk coverlet, made one hundred years before the first crazy quilt went crazy; but quite as erratic in design for all that. This bed is always in beautiful order of linen, lace and feathers; but is only used when the family is very happy or very

sad. When Johanna's oldest sister was a bride was the first time, and a few years later the dear old grandmother rested there in death a day or two, with her worn hands folded over the ancient linen that her mother had made up when she was a girl. Above the long bed is the wee little shelf, almost like a doll's couch, and in that nest, at different times, has Johanna seen two little brothers and a little sister. New-born babies are treated with all due honor in Holland.

But now let us follow Johanna into one of the queerest rooms that you have ever seen, and if you call it the "cow parlor" you will not be the first one so to name it. But we fear that you will give some persons a wrong idea of its exquisite cleanliness and real aspect of good cheer. The walls of this big room are all painted the same deep, brilliant blue and varnished. On them are hung pots and pans and kitchen utensils, nearly all of them polished to look as much like gold as the kettles on which Johanna was at work. The floor of one-half the room is brick in a pattern of red and yellow. In the middle, where the family dine and sit with their knitting when company is not present, is a gay rag carpet. There the table is set with coarse linen, white as snow, and with quaint dishes that would make a collector of old china envious, and with little, thin silver spoons; yes, and big ones having on their handles windmills or ships in full sail. But for what is this strip of oilcloth running right through the long part of the room? Lift the oilcloth, and you will

find a board cover; lift that, and there is a clear stream of running water a foot or more deep and as wide. What is it for? Well, in winter the cover is off and it is used to carry away anything disagreeable from the other side of this room which you have called the "cow parlor." In that side are four or five —can we call such pretty little apartments stalls? Their walls are also blue; you cannot find any dust or trace of a cobweb even. The floor is yellow sand, now all marked off in a fancy pattern of criss-cross lines; for the stalls are empty, it being summer. Every pail or bucket is painted or polished; you might sit down there in white satin and not get a stain or a mark. But what about the parlor in winter? Well *then* the cows are there; but every cow is daily scrubbed with soap and water until its skin is as clean as the poodle dog's which sits in a lady's lap. Then, too, into the stream of running water is swept everything that could taint the air of the place. But this is summer, and now the cows are all knee deep in lush grass and buttercups out on the polders.

Johanna hangs up her kettles and opens a door into the cheese room, where her work will be for an hour or two. Here, on shelves, are rows and rows of Edam cheeses, round as cannon balls, and their outer covering as red as the tulips in Johanna's garden. From the making of these is the income of the family. Through the outside door now you can see more water, more low green ground and the pig-pens. The pigs

have not a parlor exactly; but, if they love filth, their lives here must be prolonged anguish, for they are kept clean, and clean is their habitation.

This is Johanna's home. Now, what are her pleasures? Well, she liked to go to school, and went until she was fourteen years old. Now, when her work is done, she sits in a funny little arbor on the canal bank with some girl friends, who have the same fun that happy girls always have—perhaps one reads while the rest knit or make lace. They plan to go to Amsterdam for the next Queen's Birthday, when they will see the city and visit the wonderful Rijk's Museum. They talk of the approaching wedding of a friend and life seems all bright to them, for they are light-hearted and healthy. But they are Christian girls, and when one of them tells of the sufferings of the poor Armenians or of the massacre of the missionaries in China, they feel and talk as the girls in the Missionary Society feel. Johanna plans to make some extra cheeses and to give the proceeds to her pastor for missions. They are all your sisters, you see, even if they do wear funny clothes, and if their willing feet do clatter about in wooden shoes on week days, and if their hands do daily tasks that would seem rough to you. All that is only a matter of this "environment" about which you hear so much nowadays. Some of these hands, however, play very well on the little cabinet organs which you find in these homes; but, best of all, they are hands tender with little chil-

dren, kind to parents, very loving to the old and ready to help the unfortunate. Johanna, scrubbing her pots and kettles, might need a little outside polish herself if she were to leave her own people; but she frames her inner life by the Golden Rule, and that is best of all.

A STREET SINGER OF ITALY.

TESSA was an Italian girl, who lived in a palace—but a very strange one. Hundreds of years ago a certain Queen Johanna started to build a magnificent palace on the bay of Naples. If it was ever quite finished we do not know; but to-day the huge building is a picturesque mass of ruined halls, windows, pillars and columns. The Italian climate is so fine that almost any shelter can make a dwelling place for the poor, and so for a long time this shell of a palace has been the home of men, women and children, goats, hens and dogs.

Ever since Tessa could remember, her Uncle Pietro, his wife, his son and his wife's sister had lived in the palace. When they were sleepy they had their heaps of straw or rags; if it was very cold they could make a tiny fire in a brass pan called a scaldino. As for cooking, it was easy to start a fire of charcoal in the street or anywhere else, just enough to boil some chestnuts or a pot of macaroni. None of the family ever did any hard work; for they earned quite enough to keep them fat and hearty by wandering about as musicians. Decked in gaudy attire, they went eve-

nings from one large hotel to another, playing on the guitar or the tambourine and dancing as they sang for the amusement of the tourists who were sure to be pleased and to pay well, especially if they were Americans.

Tessa liked the life, for she had a fine voice, was at first very pretty, and when she was able to earn a good deal they kept her gayly dressed. But one spring, after heavy rains, the mud floor of the palace was very damp to sleep on, so that Tessa took the chills and fever, grew thin, and for a time lost her voice, and then life began to be hard. Her uncle became cross and often told her that she did not earn her salt—no, indeed, for salt had a big tax on it.

One cold Sunday Tessa strolled away to an old church that she liked very much. The light that came through the painted windows was red and made her feel warmer in body, and then above all she loved the music. While she listened to that she studied, too, a great window picture of our Saviour—one, which, unlike most such pictures in Roman Catholic countries, did not show him suffering agonies, but smiling most beautifully as he blessed little children. Tessa always called that picture to herself "The Good Brother." This Sunday morning, when she got back to the palace, she discovered that her uncle had taken his family to Sorrento for the summer. They had moved easily, as all the possessions that were not on their backs they carried in their hands.

Poor Tessa! Left all alone in her little corner of the big palace, she cried bitterly at first, because being deserted in this heartless way hurt her feelings. She had a loving nature, and, then, too, it seemed lonesome without Pietro's noisy family, who were always shouting, laughing or loudly quarreling. She was cheered a little to find that they had left her Marco, the pet dove. She had loved and cared for Marco ever since she found him hurt by a stone some cruel child had thrown. Marco was well now, but could not fly far away.

The days grew warmer, and after a time Tessa was less lonely. When she had a chill she would hurry out into the golden sunshine until she was warm again; she loved to be out of doors. There was a little nook in the broken wall where at sunset she used to climb in order to watch the beautiful bay turn all rose and crimson or gold color, for the palace was close by the water, and from the ruined arches she could at any time see the smoke-wreaths above Mount Vesuvius. Wild flowers, too, were abundant, and Tessa used to pick all that she could find, then running along by the side of fine carriages she would offer them to the ladies within. The road past the palace went to the supposed site of the tomb of Virgil, and was one of the favorite drives of the fashionable people, and of strangers as well. If the ladies took her flowers, often they tossed her a few coppers, and with these she could buy food of her neighbors. If she had no

such luck, the neighbors were good-natured and would give her a bit of something to eat. They had talked the thing over, and had decided that it was very shabby to desert the child as Pietro had done. They were more than ever kind when they noted that Tessa grew weaker, that dark rings came under her eyes, and that she coughed badly at times. Still, after a few weeks of letting her voice rest from singing, she found that it had returned sweeter by far than before, when she was straining it.

The weather grew hot, the spring flowers faded and gradually disappeared, except from gardens, to which, of course, Tessa had no access. She had never liked to beg, which was really strange, for in Naples children begin to hold out their hands for coppers before they can ask for them. But coppers Tessa must have, or else she would go hungry. A neighbor one day gave her a few boiled chestnuts and said, "If you don't like to beg, why don't you go again to the hotels and sing for the travelers? I think that your voice is better than ever it was."

"I have no tambourine, and then it takes my breath away now to dance when I sing; besides that, Uncle Pietro has taken away the yellow sash and the ribbons that I used to wear—this old cotton gown is all rags."

"You don't look well, but you could join some band like Roberto's, and sing in chorus; he would let you."

"I might do that, but I would rather be alone," said Tessa, thinking the thing over as she wandered back to feed her dove with a crumb or two she could scarcely spare. That evening she went slowly down to the Parker Hotel, where she used to go with Pietro; she was faint and feverish; her eyes were too bright and her cheeks too flushed, but she looked better and almost as pretty as before she was ill. There were no musicians hanging about the place, so suddenly Tessa resolved to sing alone—but what should she sing? All Pietro's songs were rattling street melodies for several voices, and were to be accompanied by dancing. Tessa knew by ear several exquisite airs which she had heard in the church that she was so fond of visiting when she was cold or tired or longed for the picture in the sunny window. Now, half hidden under a big orange tree near the hotel entrance, she sang so sweetly, and made such strange selections for a street singer, that several people came out of the hotel and urged her to go on whenever she stopped. She was over-weary, but strangely excited; it seemed to her that she had never sung so easily, and the people found it quite wonderful; but after a time she stopped, and they thought that she was trying to remember something. Instead of that her head swam, and suddenly she sank in a little heap under the bushes. One of the waiters who came to pick her up recognized her as belonging to Pietro's band, and, guessing what the matter was, he brought her a cup

of warm soup and a roll as soon as she came to herself; then he questioned her, and as he got her sorrowful little story he told it to the people. In a few minutes they collected for her ten francs in silver, and to Tessa this two dollars was a small fortune.

After the rest had gone into the hotel parlor one lady lingered and talked with the child. She was an American, but she spoke a little Italian, and one year before she had lost a little daughter with consumption. Tessa's thin face and constant cough touched her heart and made her feel very tender to this homeless little girl, especially as she remembered how she lavished every comfort and luxury that money could buy on her own little Nellie.

After a talk with the child she went into the hotel and brought out a fatherly old man, who was a doctor. He examined Tessa's pulse, her heart, and, much to her surprise, sounded her lungs; then he talked English to the lady, and poor Tessa remembered that her uncle had said that English was the language of horses; she agreed with him. Then the doctor put a little white pill in her mouth and called to the waiter to bring out a glass of hot milk. Tessa had that to drink, and forgetting that she had ever been hungry, she offered to sing in return for the kindness they had all shown to her. Instead of that, the lady made the waiter give Tessa a bed in a little room of the hotel, and told her she could sleep there until the morning. Tessa looked at the bed

in awe and admiration, then she carefully put one blanket on the floor and slept on it as she had not slept for a long time, perhaps because she was not as hungry as usual.

The next morning Mrs. Howard again gave Tessa all the bread and milk that she could eat; then, taking her in a carriage, she drove back to the palace and questioned the grown people there about Tessa. Everyone declared that she was "a good little thing," none too well treated by Pietro. Moreover, it was discovered that he was no real relation to the child, but had kept her because her voice was a means of gain to him.

Tessa meanwhile went to find Marco, who blinked at her with his bead-like eyes, as if to complain, "You went away, and I had no supper nor any breakfast." Then Tessa, with a blush, drew from the ragged bosom of her gown a crust that she had saved that morning, and crumbed it up for Marco to gobble most greedily. Mrs. Howard liked that trait of kindness in the child, whose big eyes and pale face touched her heart. From the palace they drove to the dwelling-place of an old priest who knew Tessa, and there Mrs. Howard and he had a long talk about the lady's wish to adopt the child. The priest said that her parents were decent people, but were dead; that he had the right to say what should become of her; and after he had made some not unreasonable conditions, and had made strict

inquiries about Mrs. Howard (for which she respected him all the more), he said that he would not put any hindrance in her way if she were to adopt the child. Tessa, listening, fancied she was being cared for by a saint, like people in stories of miracles, only the saints in pictures were not dressed so nicely as was Mrs. Howard in her pretty silks and laces.

Next they went to fine shops such as Tessa had never heard of, much less seen, and there the lady bought all sorts of white garments that seemed very small for her, and then began to fit pretty gowns and jackets to Tessa—yes, and stockings and soft kid shoes that did not squeeze her feet at all. Back to the hotel then they went, and there a pleasant maid gave Tessa the first warm bath that ever she had in a bathtub, and afterward arrayed her in some of those new garments, when it was seen by everyone that little shy Tessa would be a beauty just as soon as she gained a little flesh—and so began a wonderful new life.

Of course, Tessa had a great deal to learn and a good deal to forget, but she was open-hearted, affectionate and eager to please all who were so good to her. After a week of abundant food, of sea bathing and of a little strengthening medicine from the kind old doctor at the hotel, Tessa coughed no more and her pretty cheeks filled out their soft curves, while her life was so happy that she sang like a lark whenever she was alone. Even Marco's plumage

looked sleeker, and he got so fat that he was a bit clumsy. He ate at all times throughout the day, and at night he perched on the brass rod at the head of Tessa's little bed. There he slept in peace; but quite too early in the morning hopped off his perch and promenaded over his mistress's face, until she waked up and answered his cooing.

Time passed. Tessa grew into a lovely young woman, grateful to her dear adopted mother. She became so fine a singer that she might have made a great fortune in grand opera, if she had cared only for fame. Instead of that she, from the first, sang only in two places and for two objects, which were in a way one and the same. She sang in churches for the love and praise of that Saviour whose compassionate face in the picture had meant so much to her when she was a desolate child, and she sang for money in grand concerts for the benefit of just such homeless and forlorn little creatures as the Tessa who once lived in the old palace by the shore.

THE RABBI'S GRANDSON.

CHAPTER I.

ONE beautiful September afternoon a great steamer was swiftly making its way toward our shores from a German port. Among the many people grouped about, or walking up and down on its wide deck, was a middle-aged lady, who sat somewhat apart from the rest in a steamer chair. She had a sweet motherly face, and when she spoke to her son, a boy of twelve, her voice was soft and refined as might have been expected from her face.

What she said was this: "Johnny, why do you go so often to the second-cabin deck? Most of the people there look rough and unattractive; can you not find amusement enough among the first-class passengers?"

"Well, mother, I will tell you why I go. There is an *awful*—no I mean a very nice boy over there, a fellow who knows a lot—I mean a great deal," he translated, seeing the twinkle in his mother's eyes. "He is not quite thirteen yet, and is much smaller than I am, but he talks German and French, has studied Latin and Hebrew. Just think of that!"

"Perhaps he is a young Jew."

"That is just what he is, and his grandfather is a—a—sort of a minister."

"A rabbi perhaps," again suggested Mrs. Ilsley.

"I think so; any way he is that white-haired old man who looked too feeble to be travelling, or so you said one day. Ben, that is the boy's name, said that he was the most learned man in some city of Prussia, where they come from. Ben thinks everything of him. His manners, and Ben's too, are much better than Ben's father's; he, the father, looks just like an old clothes peddler; but I think that the grandfather must look like Moses in the Bible, you know."

"Why, Johnny?"

"Oh, he seems wise and good and someway different from other people. Ben says that he can repeat all the Psalms in Hebrew; but he does look very weak. He did not want at all to come to America, but when his only daughter, Ben's mother, died, he could not be separated from Ben. The reason that Ben knows so much is because his grandfather has always taught him. Ben never went to school a day, he says. He wants Ben to be a great scholar like himself, but Ben's father is all for making money. He thinks that Ben does not need any more education, and that worries his grandfather terribly, because all Mr. Cohen is coming to New York for is to get rich. Ben loves to study, but he would like to be a doctor, not a teacher, he says."

"Well, Johnny, you certainly have learned their family history."

"I did not ask rude questions, mamma, but it came out in talks with Ben. He has not been out to-day on deck; perhaps his grandfather is seasick."

"The first few days were rough and may have been too much for him," said the lady.

"There! Look!" whispered John. "That man with the coarse face is Ben's father—the one beyond the rail—Oh *how* Ben dislikes that woman he is talking with now!"

Mrs. Ilsley glanced at the two, thinking that even at that distance the man was certainly most unattractive, for his small sharp eyes were shifting, his mouth cruel and his whole expression crafty, when he would be thought agreeable, and hard when his features were in repose.

"Yes indeed," thought Mrs. Ilsley," the old man belongs to a quite different type; his face suggests spirituality and intellect, while this man belongs in the class with Shylock."

She had spoken the last words half aloud, and Johnny asked, "Who was Shylock?"

"A character told of by Shakespeare; he, too, was all for making money."

"Ben does not look one bit like his father. He has a good face. None of them knew that fat Jewess the father is talking to before she got on board, but Mr. Cohen talks to her half the time. The steward

says she looks to him just like a woman who was caught once smuggling goods through the custom-house."

"Oh, Johnny, don't let us gossip about people at that rate. People on ship-board often get too curious about each other's affairs."

"But being shut right up with such queer folks, we have to look at them," protested Johnny.

"Yes, it is right to be interested in people, and better still, to feel an interest that makes us want to help them where we can," said his mother, "but we must be very careful how we judge strangers, for fear we do them great injustice."

"I cannot help Ben much, but he said he had not been so lonesome since the day I first talked to him. He misses his mother awfully—yes, *awfully* is the right word this time, mother," said John, gazing affectionately into the dear smiling face then so near his own, and asking himself what life would be to him if his mother was gone away from earth forever. Such a sorrow had come to poor little Ben. Was it any wonder that Ben choked when he spoke of his mother to Johnny, or that he often looked as if he must cry, and instead hurried away, saying that perhaps his grandfather wanted him.

This afternoon as John told his mother more about the boy, her motherly heart was touched.

"Poor Ben!" she exclaimed, "and to think that if he is really a Jew he has never been taught those

beautiful words of Jesus about the 'many mansions' prepared for those who love him when they go from earth. He does not even believe that Jesus died to redeem men from sin, nor that he arose from the dead, nor that he promised that because he lived his people should live also. When he thinks of his mother it must be with only a dim hope that she is somewhere in God's great universe, for probably he has not learned of the Christian's heaven. Johnny let us pray for this little motherless, Christless Jew."

Johnny did not reply, but looked thoughtfully across the wide waste of waters, tightly clutching his mother's hand under the steamer rug. What did a fellow do who had no mother? Yes, indeed, no word but "awful" applied to such a state of things.

That night there was a full moon, and everybody who could be there was out on the deck, for the ocean was like a shimmering plain across which the moon made a broad silvery path. Down on the steerage deck the emigrants danced and sang to the music of a hurdy-gurdy owned by an Italian who also possessed a monkey. The second-cabin passengers, in many cases, thrifty mechanics or tradesfolk in a small way, exchanged confidences about the homes they had left and the chances for bettering themselves in the States.

John Ilsley roamed about all over this deck looking for Ben; he passed Nathan Cohen, as Ben's father was called, several times, but he could not bring him-

self to speak to the man. The only time that he had done so, Ben's father had been servile rather than civil, had fawned on and flattered John until the little fellow felt a real disgust for him. John Ilsley was a mature enough and quite intelligent lad for his age, but shielded and tenderly cared for from infancy, as he had been, he could not have understood nor have entered into the worries and perplexities that already beset the Jewish lad.

In one of the smallest of the low-priced staterooms, at the stern of the ship, Ben sat this night by his grandfather's berth. He had turned down the shade over the electric light in the passage outside the room, but the beautiful strong moonlight made the small apartment radiant, and the old rabbi, stretched out there, looked strangely like a recumbent marble statue, for his fine face and long hair were white; so, too, was the coverlet drawn up under his crossed hands. He had been ill all day, and Ben had been his faithful little nurse, but for an hour now the old man had slept, and the boy had nothing to do but to listen to faint echoes of the laughter, the music and the merry-making of the emigrants on the steerage deck which happened to be not far away. A kindly steward, busy about some one of his never-ending duties, had passed the stateroom-door times without number; but at last a glimpse of the silent figure perched there under the port-hole appealed to his sympathies, and he thrust his shaggy head

just inside the narrow doorway, whispering, "Run out, my boy, for a turn around the deck! I'll look in, if I hear a whimper out of him, and I will get him anything that he asks for—he is a right nice old gentleman, but if he is coming to the States to make his fortune he'd a done better, I take it, to have started a few years earlier. It is them that can step lively that gits there nowadays, and he ain't so young as some—is he now?"

"No, he is growing old," agreed Ben, recognizing in the steward a man who had helped his grandfather up-stairs one day, philosophizing all the while in a quaint way that seemed characteristic.

"Now he ain't so young as *some*—but then again there is them that is older than what he be. Well, Sonny, shall I spell you for a time while you go stretch your legs?"

Ben was just going to thank the fellow and accept his offer, when his grandfather opened his eyes and said, "Wait a few minutes, Benjamin, then go and stay as long as you like, for you have been a good patient child all day and a comfort to the old man, but while I feel stronger I want to say some things to you."

Ben sank back on the hard seat, and the steward disappeared, nodding in a mysterious way that Ben did not try to understand. Some said the steward was "queer" because he was a "Yankee," and others

referred his peculiarities to a sunstroke suffered some time somewhere.

"Benjamin," said the old rabbi, when they were again alone, "I fear that I shall not live until we see land—no—don't speak—my son, listen; for my breath is short," he protested, lifting his thin hand as Ben gave an exclamation of alarm and surprise.

"Your mother left money with your father to educate you, but you will never see it; something tells me this. However, I have often heard that no one need grow up ignorant in America. Benny, will you promise me to study diligently?"

"I will, grandfather; you know that study is never tiresome to me."

"I know it, my lad, and am glad. Now I have another promise to get from you, and one that must be a secret between us from this time forth. Can I trust you to do something for my sake and for your mother's? Yes, and in days to come, for your own sake, but it must never be spoken of, *never* even to your father."

"You may trust me, grandfather."

"You promise solemnly? It may be the *last* request that I will ever make, and you will *never* forget?"

"Never," protested the boy.

"Well then, all unknown to any person, will you write a letter every year until you come of age, to Herr Weiller, the banker, at whose house in Berlin

you have often been with me and your mother? Will you say in this letter *where* you are and what you are doing; make it, if you can, such a letter as you would write to me if I were alive, and be sure that you always send it about the beginning of the Jewish New Year. Now you will, perhaps, never get a word in answer, none at least for years, but you are to write just the same, to send your own address, and to tell where a reply could find you, *but no one else. Can* and *will* you attend to this, without fail, year after year, for my sake and for your mother's? Above all, remember that even the fact of making this promise you must keep secret. Some time you will understand it all, but in the meantime remember that I never have asked you to do a wrong thing nor an unjust. The law teaches children to obey their parents, therefore obey your father, unless your conscience forbids. Work for character, truth and honesty; never sacrifice these for money-getting. I can imagine a case when your father may urge you one way, Ben, and the teachings of me or of your mother may draw you another. Then fear the Lord, depart from evil and remember that 'happy is the man that findeth wisdom and the man that getteth understanding.' "

The old man stopped to study the boy's face, which, even in the bright moonlight, he could see was turned toward him with fixed attention; then he added slowly, as if reluctant to say it and yet forced

to speak plainly, "If, in time, you cannot stay under your father's roof, go elsewhere. I do not like this woman with the hard face and keen eyes, the one who seeks your father's society so constantly; she may have gold, but she is not such a woman as Solomon the preacher says will do her husband 'good all the days of his life.' If he takes *her* home with him to fill your mother's place and she does not make for peace there——

The old rabbi was talking half to himself, but his words had a sudden effect on Ben, who sprang to his feet with an angry protest, which his grandfather cut short, saying almost sternly: "Be quiet, my boy! Of a certainty your father will marry, and he will not ask your permission nor consult your wishes. If he takes this woman, try not to quarrel with her, for a quarrel is the pastime of a fool. Endure in patience what you cannot help, and when you can no longer endure, go out and fight your way in the world. Always say to yourself that neither hunger, nor cold, or poverty can really hurt you, but sin and ignorance can and will. Hate evil and *learn—learn—learn*, and let what you learn always be wisdom and goodness."

The old man had become so weak that his last words were in a hoarse whisper. He was silent for a time, then, seeing that Ben was sobbing in a nervous stifled way, he stretched out his long thin hand which trembled until it rested on the lad's curly hair,

while he said fervently: "May the Lord turn away thine eyes from beholding vanity and quicken thee in his way; may he bless thee and send thee prosperity. May he be thy strength and thy song and thy salvation. May he teach thee good judgment and knowledge, then shall his holy law be thy delight."

The rabbi's voice did not falter until he had finished his solemn blessing; but all strength had left it when, a little later, he half whispered affectionately: "Now run out, my little son, the air will do you good. I shall want nothing."

But Ben had lost all desire to join the noisy merry crew on deck. To be sure, he was only a boy, and had hitherto felt a boyish pleasure in change and travel, in thoughts of a new home in a new country; but to-night, all at once, he realized that his grandfather was a very old man and not likely to live much longer. Without ever having been told, Ben understood that both his mother and the old rabbi were finer, better educated and more lovable than was his father. How lonely he would be when the old man died! He had never in all his recollection gone to his father in any trouble or perplexity, for he had known intuitively that no help nor sympathy would be given him were he to go. Of his mother Ben thought, with eyes fast filling with hot tears; she had been very sweet and gentle. What a contrast she was to that vulgar, over-dressed woman, who was perhaps

that very moment on deck with his father, loudly laughing and talking.

Ben was more mature than most boys of his age. He was as full of fun and life as any boy, but he had naturally a remarkable intellect; his training had been severe. He had thought a good deal, and he knew considerable of life and of human nature for a lad so young. For all this, Ben was forlorn and homesick as he sat in the stuffy little stateroom listening to the soft swish of the water against the side of the ship and the softer breathing of the old man in the under berth. He began to think of New York almost with dread and to wish that he was once more back in the small house under the great linden trees in the foreign town where he had been born. Just around the corner from it was the synagogue where sometimes his grandfather read the law. How solemn the old man had seemed this night. The voyage had been hard for him, he would be all right after they landed. A little comforted by this thought, Ben drew the coverlet snug over his grandfather's shoulders, then, kneeling under the port hole, he looked out on the moonlit sea, and for the hundredth time tried to imagine what the new country would be like. By and by he grew drowsy and, neglecting to undress, he nestled down in the bunk, wondering whose head had rested on the hard pillow the last voyage over in that state-room—then before long he slumbered as peacefully as his grandfather.

It was about midnight when Ben's father came down. He occupied the third berth. As he always found the old man wide awake he asked him to-night if he felt any better. He received no answer and, hardly knowing why, he touched his long thin hands, crossed on the coverlet, finding them like ice. Ben slept so soundly that he did not wake up when the "queer steward," lifting him as he might lift a baby, carried him to a bed in an unoccupied stateroom.

"He will make a great uproar when he knows his grandfather is dead," Mr. Cohen told the steward, and the man replied: "We have to hush these unpleasant things up because it makes the first-class passengers nervous, you know."

CHAPTER II.

About one o'clock the following night there was a burial at sea. A little group of second-class passengers, some of them of the old man's own race, reverently watched while all that was mortal of the venerable rabbi was committed to the sea. The usual burial service was omitted; but some of the older Hebrews recited a psalm, then all was over. The next day the sun shone bright and the ship rushed on like some great living creature rejoicing in its strength. Ben's father behaved with decent gravity, but he felt no real regret at his loss, for the old man's upright

ways were a reproach to his own more crooked dealings, and he had never felt free in his company. Then too, after starting, he had been surprised to find how little property his father was bringing with him; he had only enough to keep himself with strict economy. But Ben mourned sincerely. The poor boy felt as if he were enduring a nightmare out of which he might waken to find himself at home again. The constant succession of new faces and figures passing before him seemed as unreal as the events of that night.

It was not until the day after the rabbi's death and burial that Mr. Ilsley heard of Ben's bereavement, and then Johnny knew why he had not seen him about on deck. His mother said at once, "Go, Johnny, and try to find out from a steward where your little friend is; he may be very lonely—or better still, let us go together."

The bare looking dining-room of the second cabin was quite deserted on that pleasant day. In the quietest end of the room, with his head on his arm and his arm on the table they found Ben. His cheeks were tear-stained and his dark eyes very sad.

Mrs. Ilsley forgot that she had never seen him before and felt only that he was sorely hurt and grieving. She put her arm around him with impulsive kindliness and smoothed the tumbled hair from his forehead, saying: "Johnny has missed you very much, and we are both so sorry for you that we had to hunt you up." Then, with a sympathy that Ben

knew was real, she drew the lad on to talk of himself. He had lived long enough to know all about that vulgar contempt which some so-called Christian people show toward a race that they consider outcast, ignoring the fact that our Lord was a Jew, and that all who have Hebrew blood are by no means cheats and sharpers. Indeed, some of the greatest geniuses have been Jews.

Ben told her about his mother, about his little sister Hannah, too, who had been so sweet, just like a white violet, his mother said. They were both buried in the graveyard behind the synagogue. He told how learned people thought that his grandfather was, and of a great library that he had sold before they sailed—and *now*—then Ben began to sob, "Grandpa is lost in this awful ocean, I cannot bear to see the waves to-day!"

"No, no! my dear boy, only the worn-out body of your grandfather sank there, not his soul. We are not made to go out like burned-down candles when we die. His soul has returned to God who gave it, and as the Scriptures tell you, 'Like as a father pitieth his children, so the Lord pitieth them that fear him.' Do you remember two wonderful things that are said of God? That 'He telleth the number of the stars.' How great that makes him seem! And 'He bindeth up the broken in heart.' That shows him so loving as well as powerful. Never think of your dear one in the waves. Remember how 'Enoch

was not, for God took him,' and how Daniel the prophet said, 'those that sleep in the dust shall awake.'"

Ben knew that the Ilsleys were not Hebrews, but this lady was kind and her words were comforting. He was cheered, and willingly went out into the sunshine with them. Mrs. Ilsley said a word to the purser, and Ben was allowed after that to go on the deck with the first-class passengers when he liked. When the boys were tired of exercise they used to sit each side of Mrs. Ilsley, while she read aloud from a book of travels about which they often stopped to talk, and Ben showed a keen intellect and fine qualities of heart as well. After such an afternoon, she said to her genial husband, "In spite of your belief that I think our Johnny the most remarkable boy that ever lived, I must admit that Ben promises to be a far better scholar. He knows now a great deal more than Johnny."

"His father is far from being either a gentleman or a scholar. I fear that if Ben has any education after this he will work hard for it."

"I wish that we could help him."

"I would do it gladly; but it is not likely that a Jew would let us have any great influence over his child."

Three days after Johnny renewed his friendship with Ben all became excitement over the landing. It was a glorious afternoon when the ship steamed

in past the statue of Liberty, and Ben listened eagerly to everything that Johnny could tell about the various objects coming into sight. He was delighted with the bright-colored foliage on the islands, he admired the delicate tracery of the Brooklyn Bridge; he thought the new country was going to prove very beautiful.

"Where are you going to live?" asked Johnny. "I hope it will be near enough for me to come to see you often, and for you to be at our house; we live up beyond Central Park. My father is a doctor, you know; what is yours?"

"He has no profession; he was in a shop, but now he means to deal in books."

"Is he—I mean—well, mother says that it makes no difference if only people are nice, you know; but I hope he is rich, for then you may not live so far down town—and a publisher has a fine business, I think," said Johnny, trying to be tactful.

"I cannot see how he can be really poor, and yet I am sure that he would say that he was not at all rich, and he will not publish books, but only sell old ones. My grandfather knew the inside of almost every book worth reading that ever was written; but he used to say 'for a man who never read much' that my father knew the most about books—what they cost, and all that."

Johnny said "yes," but wanting to be polite he kept still a while, then said, "Of course, you cannot

tell now where you may live, but remember we live at 256—— Street, and be sure to come to see me."

Ben said the address over twice, and just then Mrs. Ilsley appeared, saying: "Come, Johnny, and roll up your things that are all about the stateroom, for we shall soon be at the pier. Now, Ben, I will say good-bye to you, for I may not see you in the confusion of landing. Be a brave little man; when you get lonely, remember the many, many times that King David said, 'Then I cried unto the Lord in my distress and he heard me.' You know, Ben, God is 'the same yesterday, to-day, and forever.' I hope you are going to be very happy in this new country."

Some impulse had made her speak to Ben as she might have done to one twice his age, but Ben understood. He held his head high, although his lip trembled, and her motherly tone so touched him that he could only say, "Thank you."

It came over her, what if her Johnny was going, motherless and forlorn, to some strange land; and stooping impulsively she kissed the boy's broad forehead. When she turned then to go down the gangway she hoped that Ben liked her well enough to find comfort in her words; she did not imagine that the sensitive, mature little fellow felt that he could almost die for her; and then to think that Johnny had not only a mother like this, but a father, who so loved his son that he seemed to expect him to

come to him with all his interests and his troubles just as he might go to a friend near his own age.

"Here, boy," said a passenger standing near Ben, "somebody on the other deck is calling to you."

It was his father, with a bag which he told Ben to take special care of while they were getting off the ship. Even then, to the boy's disgust, he saw the woman whom he disliked hovering about, if the word could be applied to the motions of a person who weighed more than one hundred and eighty. She was arrayed in overmuch finery of a cheap and gaudy sort. An enormous hat with almost half a peck of artificial flowers sprouting from its brim was quite too youthful in its make-up to accord well with her heavy features and the fat chin below her coarse mouth. She leered at Ben with what was meant for playfulness, and said: "You have made some swell friends, I see; that is the way in New York. Freeze to the rich and work them for all they're worth; isn't that the racket?"

Ben's knowledge of English did not cover any slang, but he understood the import of her vulgar speech, and unfortunately, she understood the dislike written on his own expressive countenance, and from that time she was Ben's enemy.

Before coming to the States, Ben had often thought that he did not know his own father very well. After being a few months in New York, he just as often wished that he was even more ignorant than he had

been. Now his father dropped all the appearance of uprightness he had put on during his father-in-law's life. He was coarse in manners and conversation, and tricky whenever he could be so without detection. He did not go near the synagogue, paid no attention to the Sabbath day and professed no religion whatever. He rented several rooms near the Bowery, and fitted one long dingy room on the ground floor for a second-hand book shop; a few smaller rooms above he kept for living rooms. These were, as yet, only used for bedrooms, and their meals were taken at cheap restaurants. It was all most unhomelike when compared to the house that Ben remembered, where his mother kept everything spotless and bright; where the wide window-seats were full of flowering plants.

Mr. Cohen took great pains to instruct Ben about all the books; their cost, value, and how to sell them to advantage. He evidently expected the boy to be a great help in the shop. They were not to begin business until about the holidays, although the books were bought in large quantities. The reason of this delay seemed to be Mr. Cohen's wish to get his upper rooms ready for occupancy. In the meantime Ben's father took him all over New York, wherever a red flag at the front door showed there was an auction sale within. In this way they picked up tables, chairs, carpets, and all sorts of household furnishings. Before Ben understood his father's business ways he

was puzzled at his buying things which, when he bought, he declared were worthless rubbish—"broken, cracked, ruined." But the same objects, *once his own*, would be shown to Ben as good as new "and worth five times what I gave for them." The old rabbi would have understood, and perhaps remembered, a saying of Solomon's: "It is naught, it is naught, saith the buyer; but when he is gone his way then he boasteth."

At first the bustle and excitement of these auctions amused Ben, for it was all so novel. But one day when his father bid off a sewing machine, of the kind Ben's mother had often wanted, but never possessed, a sudden suspicion crossed the boy's mind. He seemed to hear again the loud laugh of that coarse woman on the boat—to see her grimy hands, overloaded with big rings, and his grandfather's words returned to him, "Of a certainty your father will marry, and he will not ask your permission. Try not to quarrel with her."

He thought that he could not stay a moment longer in the hot auction room, where the air was so foul with tobacco smoke. How could the people find the auctioneer's vulgar jokes so very funny? Would his father never decide whether or not he wanted a certain chest of drawers? When at last the proceedings were suspended for that day and they were on their way home, Ben asked, "Father, is it not almost time that I was beginning school?"

"Why—what for?

The cool indifference of his father's tone meant opposition later, or so Ben feared.

"Why, father? Because grandfather only gave me a good start; he talked a great deal to me about going to school in this country and studying very hard to get a fine education."

"Nonsense," sneered Mr. Cohen. "Europe is full of well-educated men who can't earn their salt. Take your grandfather, for instance, with all his learning he would have starved if he had not inherited a little fortune. (What he ever did with it puzzles me.) But, Ben, in the States, as I am told, you must have a trade or a good business; unless you are rich, education does not go for much. I am too poor a man, anyway, to support a boy in idleness, while he fills his head with dead languages, and you might as well know once for all that you have got to work your way. You can educate yourself from the books in my shop. I'll warrant you that nine-tenths of all the Jews in New York got rich without ever going to schools."

"But it is not everything to get rich!" was on the tip of Ben's tongue, when he reflected that his father would not agree with this opinion of his grandfather's, and the boy was silent.

They were then in a very crowded part of Broadway, but Ben took no more heed of where he was going than he used to take in the quiet old town where he

was born. Tearing up the street came two electric cars, around a corner rushed an express cart, while down from another street came a school omnibus full of children. Just how it happened Ben never knew, unless in trying to dodge one danger, he rushed into another; at any rate, he was knocked down by the huge, hairy leg of a draught horse. In an instant there was the usual crowd the vociferous policeman, and the people who want to know "all about the accident."

Ben heard his father's loud and angry outcries, now in German and now in English; a policeman shouted—there was talk of an "ambulance," then all the strangers' faces above Ben went into a cloud and the street noises grew faint and fainter. Ben was unconscious when the big policeman picked him up. He did not hear his father telling how poor he was and almost homeless, and eagerly urge that Ben should be taken to a free hospital, which was done so soon as an ambulance arrived. Mr. Cohen followed, and after finding that a broken leg was the worst of Ben's injuries he departed, thankful that the boy was likely to be taken good care of without any expense to him. There we will leave Ben for a few days in the hands of a surgeon and a nurse.

. . . . . .

Ben had been put in the children's ward, and when the kindly Scotch nurse thought that he was in need of amusement she brought him a lot of more or less

battered books. His politeness prevented him from telling her they were all "baby stories," but he tossed them aside, one by one, until he came to a larger, leather-covered volume whose quaint pictures made him think of his favorite German fairy legends. On one page was a description of a fight which the writer said was "the dreadfulest sight that ever I saw." Ben would not have been a real boy if he had not at once wanted to know all about this combat "whose horrors no man could imagine," unless, as the writer said, "he had seen and heard, as I did, what yelling and hideous roaring Apollyon made all the time." Yes, and the account of that one who wounded the monster with his two-edged sword. Ben turned to the front of the book, finding there a picture of a man in prison. He had a fine gentle face, and his hand rested lovingly on the head of a little girl, who was standing by his side. On a table near both was an inkstand and quills for writing; but the chain on a block in one corner and the massive walls showed that it was a prison cell all the same. Turning over a page, Ben read the whole story which was bound in with this copy of The Pilgrim's Progress—the story of John Bunyan, written by himself. Ben was a Jew and a bigoted one. He might have refused to listen if anyone had tried to tell him what was meant by a "saving knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ." But coming by chance on this book which told how a

wicked young man became a Christian, Ben read it with more and more interest, and as soon as he had finished this, began the other part, which was The Pilgrim's Progress. Ben had brains, and the beautiful clear style delighted him even before he lost himself in the real fascination of the story. He did not realize much at first what was meant by the allegory; but when he came to the part that described how the good Christian—who all the time had made him think of his dear mother—crossed the river of death and went in at the beautiful gate to the heavenly city, Ben dropped the book and thought over the story from beginning to end. So this was what it meant to be a Christian: To go to Christ with all one's burdens of sin and of trouble, to be forgiven and helped, now and here, for this life was to each of us really a kind of pilgrimage, full of trials and temptations.

When the nurse gathered up the books that night, Ben asked her to leave this one with him; he said he would "show the pictures in it to the children." Ben was soon a great favorite with the little folks who were in the same ward. Those who could limp around brought their playthings, books, or treasures over to his bed for inspection. The few larger boys played checkers or dominoes with him as soon as he was able, and the one and only baby-boy insisted on being put to sleep with Ben, and was highly indignant at the nurse who refused him the privilege. Ben had a

bright face and all children and animals always liked him.

One dull December afternoon Ben felt very lonesome, for his father seldom came to see him, and that day the boy had asked the ward doctor what he himself must do in order to become a physician. When he heard all about the high school, the college, the medical college and the foreign hospitals, in which Dr. Allen had studied, he felt greatly depressed. However was he to get such an education?

Suddenly one of the lame children gave a loud shout: "Oh, our fruit and flower lady is coming! Our *old* one—I saw her in the hall!"

There was such a hubbub then over the news that Ben could only ask, "Who is your old fruit lady?"

"*Old!*" scornfully echoed a small cripple, "she ain't old; she is new and just beautiful!"

The nurse, laughing at the child's word "new," explained that she was a lady who used to bring gifts and delicacies to the hospital; but who had been away from the city for several months.

"Here she comes! Here she is! Oh, see the big oranges!" cried a greedy little fellow.

"Apples, too!" whispered another; but to do the little rogues justice, they loved her for her own sake and not merely for what she brought them. The moment she appeared they swarmed around her, so that at first Ben could not see her face at all. When

he did see her, his cry was more joyful than any that the others had given.

"Oh, Mrs. Ilsley!" he shouted; but she could not hear him above the clatter about the apples, the oranges, and especially a green and yellow jumping-jack that she had brought to the baby of the ward. Ben resolved to surprise her; he covered his head with the sheet until, in going her rounds, she came to the boy in the next bed; then he piped from under cover, "Good afternoon, Mrs. Ilsley; how is Johnny to-day?"

She almost dropped a big apple right on Jimmy Higgins' turned-up nose, so astonished was she, first by the voice, then by Ben's beaming face as it emerged from the blanket. It was perfectly familiar, yet where and when had she known this boy? In the next instant she remembered the voyage and its events. Then all the gloom of that winter day and all Ben's fears about his future were forgotten, while Mrs. Ilsley, perched on a stool by Ben's iron cot, told him what Johnny had been doing and where he went to school, with everything else of interest that she could think of. Best of all, she knew Dr. Allen of this ward, and could get leave for Johnny to come sometimes to see Ben. Just before she had to go home she took up "The Pilgrim's Progress," and as usual said the right thing, "One great help to the best education, Ben, is reading books written in the purest, finest English. *This* is a masterpiece of literature; shall I send you some more books by Johnny?"

"What makes you so good to me, Mrs. Ilsley?"

"Because I think of you as my little brother, perhaps, and I know we have the same father in heaven."

Before another day ended, Johnny appeared, his face one big smile of jolly good fellowship. He made first for Ben's bed with the contents of a sizable covered basket. Ben was never stingy, and the nurse was greatly amused by Johnny's remark that he "knew when he fixed up that spread that, whatever ailed the fellows' *legs* there, nothing ailed their stomachs."

These same fellows, little and big, were already casting shy glances of admiration toward Ben's bed. To those who could walk, Ben called, "Come right over, boys, there is lots here! Get some sugared doughnuts, or nice soft ginger-bread, and trot some over to the fellows that can't walk."

The owner of the jumping-jack had a plaster cast on his weak back, but he annexed a big lump of maple sugar, over which he squealed in rapture, and threw sticky kisses across the ward to Ben and Johnny, who decided that visiting hospitals was great fun. After that, Johnny and the basket appeared at least once a week, and during the holidays at delightfully irregular and unexpected times. Mrs. Ilsley also visited Ben until the boy came to feel for her a love that was almost adoration, and which would have touched and astonished her if she had dreamed of its intensity.

One Sunday afternoon when the room was quieter than usual she asked Ben why he was not a Christian.

Much surprised, he told her that he supposed it was "because he was a Jew." She said that "of course he could not change his race, and that the Hebrew race had a most wonderful and a grand history, at least in its earlier days; but could he tell why he believed only in the Old Testament and not at all in the New? She believed in all the sacred Scriptures which he knew of—but she believed *so much more.*" Then simply, but clearly, knowing that Ben had a keen intellect, she tried to make him understand what it meant to be a true Christian, and what Jesus Christ really was to one who looked up to him as to a Redeemer, Friend and Teacher.

Ben listened very respectfully; he loved to hear her talk on any subject about which she was enthusiastic, but his heart was not touched. He said to himself: "She thinks this is all true, but my grandfather, the learned rabbi, knew better; he did not believe it."

When Mrs. Ilsley had said all that she thought it wise to say to Ben, she gave him a small Testament with his name on the cover, in gold letters, and he promised her to read it through and to read it with prayer, for, as she said, an ignorant Jew could not give any reason why the Christ of the New Testament was not the Messiah expected by his prophets; he could only through prejudice reject him.

"But," said Ben, flattered to be talked to as if he were older than he was, "my grandfather used to say

the Jewish people made a mistake in old times, in expecting a great *visible* leader. He thought that Jesus was a great man, but not as great as has been claimed." Then Ben told her all he remembered to have heard the old rabbi say, and she seemed much interested, but, well knowing that no one was ever argued into true conversion and sincere love to Christ the Saviour, she prayed in her inmost heart that the Holy Spirit would work in and for Ben.

Three months went by before the boy's leg was quite well, and he was dismissed from the hospital. He had really been to a school there, and had well begun his education; although that he did not realize until long afterwards.

CHAPTER III.

The day that Ben made his way down to his father's shop was cold and wintry, and it was a long walk from the hospital to the Bowery for one who had not walked much in so long a time. Ben was very tired when he pushed open the shop door and dropped wearily down on the first box of old books. Everything looked much as it did when he went out that afternoon so many weeks before; but there were a few signs of rather more activity in trade. His father greeted him with a grunt of recognition and the remark that it was "high time to get to work, for

there was more than he could do all alone, although not enough for a clerk." Then watching Ben, yet putting on an air of carelessness, he added, "your mother tries her hand at it now and then, but she does not know a copy of the Talmud from a bound volume of *Punch*.

His father expected that gasp of surprise that Ben gave; after it, he leered over his spectacles at the boy, saying: "But I don't know as I have seen you since I married Mrs. Adler; she is a pretty smart woman, but you had better not rub her fur the wrong way."

When Ben did not speak, he went on: "We needed her to see to the housework; she does not take much to *you*, but don't stir her up. I can't have any rows."

Ben was still speechless. What was there to say?

"Yours is to be the small room at the head of the stairs; go say something civil to Mrs. Cohen, then come back and learn the ropes."

Ben started; but at the foot of the stairs he stopped to say, "I will not quarrel, father, but I cannot call her my mother—never!"

"I s'pose they aren't much more alike than a rose and a cabbage, but a cabbage is the toughest and serves more purposes maybe."

The middle-aged bride was just then at the top of the stairs listening to this dialogue between father and son.

"So I am a cabbage-head, am I?" she snorted, no word more elegant would express her rage," and Ben's mother was far finer? Well, if I don't take the conceit out of this young monkey before long, it will go hard with me!" She backed then into the room near by, and there Ben found her at her sewing. She answered his "How do you do?" none too graciously.

The room was more fully furnished than formerly, but in more disorder than ever, and as for Mrs. Cohen, she was in dress and manner less pleasing, if possible, than when on the ship. Ben was glad to go on to his own domain. This was a tiny low room, furnished with the bad bargains made at previous auction sales, so far as it was furnished at all; but Ben hoped that it might prove a place of refuge during the domestic troubles which he seemed to foresee. As he left the large room he saw a small thin girl about ten years old. Her sharp little face was shaded by a mass of dark hair, and she had a scared pinched look. Not long after that he heard her protesting against something in a plaintive, high-keyed tone. Then came the sound of a blow—and childish, piteous weeping. When Ben went down-stairs he said to his father: "Who is the little girl up-stairs?"

"She belonged to some relation of my wife, and when the mother died, we had to take her; she gets some pay, but she is an ailing squalling sort of a brat, for the most part."

"Perhaps she is not happy?"

"Happy!" sneered Mr. Cohen, "*who* is—anybody out of a lunatic asylum?" Then turning to take a book from a case near by, he said: "Look at this, Ben! Here is a rare translation of an old Hindoo poem, 'The Fatal Ring,' by Kalidasa; only show it to men who seem learned, and be sure that it is never stolen. It will not do to sell it for less than —— dollars, and he named a sum that seemed to Ben very large; going on after that to tell him about other things in the shop. Ben listened attentively and proved so apt at the business, that after a few days, his father secretly decided that he needed no more education and could not be spared to go to school anyway.

Between Ben and his stepmother there was a silent antagonism, sure to be manifest sooner or later. He tried to make friends with Rachel, the shy child; but she had been told that he would tease and torment her at the earliest opportunity, and, as her life had already enough that was unpleasant in it, she fled at sight of Ben, puzzling him by her evident terror, if she could not escape in time. Mrs. Cohen did not take kindly to domestic life, and whenever her husband was away at book auctions, she invaded the shop, attended to customers and took in any money paid for odd volumes. In the course of time Ben noticed many irregularities, which made him aware that she was not quite straightforward in her doings; that sums which should have been entered

on the book at the desk, went, instead, unrecorded into her pocket.

One day Ben went up-town with his father, but returned almost immediately. Unseen by anyone he sat down in a corner and began to read, keeping an eye on the people who strolled in to turn the old books over aimlessly and then to depart, having bought none. Mrs. Cohen was at the desk, ready to talk with each and all. After a time, a fine scholarly man entered, and Ben soon noticed that Mrs. Cohen was showing him the Hindoo poem, and repeating what she had heard her husband say about it; but as Mr. Cohen had ordered that no one should sell the book in his absence, he paid no more attention.

When a half hour later Mrs. Cohen saw Ben, she supposed that he had but just come in.

Several hours after that, as Mr. Cohen was smoking his after-dinner pipe, having sent Ben to attend to moving some books which he had bought, Mrs. Cohen remarked: "That smart boy of yours will bear watching."

"What do you mean now?"

"He is mad because he can't go to school like a gentleman's son; he hates the shop and he wants spending money."

"He'll be likely to get it!"

"He will that; for there are more ways than one, as you'll find out before you're done with him, I reckon."

"Well, what'll I find out—give us a sample."

"For one thing, he has two prices for books; his price is bigger than yours and he puts the difference in his po ket."

"Prove it."

"This very morning a man was looking at that rare old thing you keep in the case. I heard Ben put the price three dollars higher than you said. That made the man hesitate about taking it."

"Why did you not show yourself and attend to the matter?"

"I started to do so, but just then a man passing upset that stall of books at the door and I had to go there to see that nothing was stolen. When I came back the man had gone without buying; he was to come again, Ben said."

Grumbling to himself, Mr. Cohen went over to the case where he kept his rarest books and manuscripts when, what was his surprise to find that the book in question was not there. Had it been stolen, or had Ben dared to sell and to keep any of the money? That was precisely what Mrs. Cohen had done with the whole amount. So angry was the shop-keeper that he could scarcely wait for Ben to come home.

Ben meanwhile, finding himself not far from the Ilsley's, ventured to stop there for a word with Johnny, or, what he cared for even more, a sight of Mrs. Ilsley. His boy friend was not home, but his mother questioned Ben, and soon he poured all his

troubles about school into her sympathetic ears, to be comforted thus: "You can get an education in the school where God has put you, right there in the shop. From Johnny's teacher, I will get a kind of scheme for you to follow with such books as you can find. Many a fine scholar has had a less likely beginning for lack of books; and now what about your New Testament readings, Ben?"

"I do not like some teachings at all," he answered with boyish frankness.

"What, for instance?"

"It tells people to be meek, to endure injuries; and I think *that* is mean spirited. I like to feel toward some folks as David felt. I was reading yesterday how he wanted none to have mercy on his enemy, to have his children vagabonds, to let the extortioner catch all that he had and to let the stranger spoil his labor; that's natural."

"Yes, quite natural; but when you have read and thought about Jesus Christ, and of such a man as Paul, you may think otherwise."

"I am a Jew," he answered with a certain self-satisfied little air that she already knew and which amused her. Mrs. Ilsley would not let him go until she rang for afternoon tea with plenty of nice little cakes. It was a small thing perhaps to make him stay, to heap his plate with dainties, to smooth his curley hair with a motherly touch; but was it of no importance that this ardent, ambitious lad was study-

ing her as the first Christian he had ever known, was learning from her the meaning of loving kindness? She made no mistake in thinking this might be one way of lifting up her Saviour that Ben might in time be drawn to Him.

Ben had to go without a sight of Johnny, but all the way home her sympathy made his heart lighter; he even decided to try to gain Mrs. Cohen's good-will, if that were possible.

"Ben!" roared his father, the moment the shop door shut behind him. "Where is that copy of '*Sacoontala?*'"

"In your case—or it was, unless Mrs. Cohen sold it this morning to the man she was showing it to."

"*She* sold it, you little scoundrel! Either *you* sold it yourself, meaning to steal the money, or you have let that man steal it."

"I never touched it."

"Come! out with the truth, or the price! Who was the man? If you tell me a lie I will thrash the flesh off your bones."

Ben was a truthful boy; he had never been beaten and he had never before seen his father in such a rage with him; so now, more angry than frightened, he tried calmly to tell the little he knew; he said that no book stall had been overturned at the door. He had but just begun to repeat the conversation between the man and his stepmother when this last person burst into the shop below from her lurking place on

the staircase. Her rage was almost like some Western cyclone. She tore around among the piled-up books on the floor, ranting, storming, loudly scolding. Such was her fury and its impetus that she actually seemed to be everywhere at once. The dust from the old volumes that she overturned in her wild gyrations went up in clouds and set her husband into fits of violent sneezing. A great deal of Mrs. Cohen's excitement then was "put on," for she realized that either to her, or to Ben, must be imputed much double dealing, which was sure, sooner or later, to come to light. Now, while her husband was too angry to judge fairly between the two, and Ben was confused by the varied and senseless charges made against him, she made a great show of righteous indignation. Ben had a hot temper, and he turned next on Mrs. Cohen with a passion quite as furious and much more real than her own. But he had told her only a few unflattering truths before his father clutched him by his jacket collar, and dragged him into a dark little room back of the shop. Ben was slight for his age and not at all strong. The thrashing that his angry father then gave him would have been far too severe, even for one much better able to endure it. Perhaps Ben's story might have ended then and there, but in his struggles he fell against the sharp edges of a packing box. He struck it head first and the blow rendered him almost unconscious; much blood flowed from a cut in his scalp, and at

once the passionate man knew that he had done enough by way of discipline. Ben rolled off into a heap of old newspapers, and was for a long time too faint to move; but, bruised and suffering in body as he was, that pain was nothing to the anger and hate which filled his young heart when he thought of the outrage put upon him by Mrs. Cohen. His mother's training had given him a high sense of honor; he loathed falsehood and trickery. Once, when he had deceived her in a childish way, the gentle old rabbi had said, "Perhaps we cannot trust our boy for a while;" and Ben, heart-broken, had clung around his neck until he was forgiven and told he could be trusted, for he repented in earnest.

He had no mother now—no kind old grandfather—only this woman toward whom he felt such enmity that he longed to torment her, to make her suffer. Oh, very wicked, hard and revengeful was poor Ben; flung there weak and hurt while he watched the wintry sunshine that stole in through a western window high up on the wall, and saw it grow pale and fade out, until, exhausted, he fell asleep.

He dreamed about the rabbi and the steamer—that he was in his bunk and the ocean was slowly trickling in through his port-hole. He awaked to find that it was real water dropping into his eyes and trickling off the end of his nose. It oozed from a soft white rag, going to and from a tin oyster can. The rag was held in the hand of a small girl who sat

on the dusty floor with a tall candle guttering down by her side, while she sopped Ben's face and plastered his hair close to his head; but with the kindest intentions. She edged quickly away as soon as he opened his eyes; but she pushed toward him a plate on which was an odd mixture of viands: a half-eaten cooky, half a slice of bread and a cup of water. In a timid voice, with many glances toward the shop, she told him that her Aunt Deb had gone out with Ben's father; that she herself had been "awfully sorry" when they "walloped him." She had been so punished for her fibbing; but she did it sometimes just the same, because she would be whipped any way, if her aunt felt cross. They had not left any supper for Ben, but she took and hid all she dared at the table, and had put it in her pocket with intent to treat Ben later. There was ample proof that she was not fibbing about this, because the bread had twine around it, and a shoe button, accidentally embedded in the cooky, was at first taken by Ben for a currant, but fortunately not swallowed. All the same, Rachel's kindness touched him, and he thanked her so cordially that all her fear of him vanished. When she said that she had not found the door locked, he tried to stand up; his legs were shaking, but by putting his hand on Rachel's bony little shoulder, he managed to get up-stairs with her help.

"Is your aunt good to you?" he asked, while they were climbing slowly toward his room.

'No—yes—oh, I don't know—but say, will rats eat me if I do not always mind her? And are there great big, striped, red-eyed rats in all these walls that do eat up children?"

"There are no such things here, nor anywhere else."

"Ain't there? Well, Ben, I love you, for you speak real pleasant to me," said the quaint little creature who looked so tiny in the dim light.

"Thank you for your good opinion, Midget, but you had better not say much about me, because your aunt does not love me, if you do."

"I know—Oh, they are coming! I hear them unlocking the door!" and Rachel fled as if the largest sort of a rat were issuing from the wall.

Ben stretched himself on his bed but not to sleep. Nearly all the night he tossed and tumbled; not wholly because he was bruised, sore and feverish, but more because his heart was full of hate, spite and all uncharitableness. He longed most earnestly to "pay back" his stepmother; above all, to turn his father against her by showing her duplicity. Sometimes he decided to run away and to try to earn his own living as an office boy or a newspaper seller. Perhaps the Ilsleys would help him to get work, and he resolved to go to them for advice. Thinking of Johnny's mother recalled his reading in the Testament she had given him. That chapter about forgiving his enemies —how strange that was. Could the chapter in Isaiah that seemed to tell of the sufferings of Jesus Christ

really have referred to him? He wondered what his grandfather would think of that; and Christ had said to those who believed on him, "Blessed are ye when men shall revile you and persecute you and say all manner of evil against you falsely for my sake."

That kind of teaching was all a mystery to Ben, who wondered if a Christian could forgive an enemy after that fashion. "I could not," he muttered to himself, "*never;* with me it is 'an eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth.'"

Ben was so pale and so dark under the eyes, so evidently ill the next day, that his father was secretly ashamed of his cruelty. Ben said to him, when they were alone for the first time: "Father, I told you the whole truth about that book, whether you will believe me or not; but you know that I have never told you a lie before. I cannot stay here if you ever beat me again as you did yesterday. I have read in the papers that parents cannot treat their children that way in this country. I could make trouble for you if I showed what cruel cuts and bruises you have made;" then in a softer tone, he added: "You never did such a thing when mother was alive."

Mr. Cohen muttered something about treating him all right if he behaved himself, and did not lie nor steal; then he bade him "go about his business." Later, from the angry dialogues between his wife and himself, Ben suspected that Mrs. Cohen was not establishing her innocence quite as fully as Mr.

Cohen required; for some of her stories lacked probability.

It was a week before Ben saw Mrs. Ilsley, and by that time he had decided that it was not honorable to be telling of their home troubles to any outsider however sympathetic. But he did show his hatred of Mrs. Cohen and threatened to run away.

"Don't do it, Ben! Stand bravely and do right in the place where God puts you," said Mrs. Ilsley. "Be upright, helpful and kind."

"Oh, I can be kind to Rachel; who could be anything else to a little singed cat like that? But to Mrs. Cohen—*never!* Now do you really believe that there ever was a man so perfect and good as the New Testament makes out that Jesus Christ was?"

"No, Ben."

"Why—I thought that you were a Christian."

"So I am, and for that reason I believe that he was a great deal *more* than a mere man: that He was *Emmanuel* or God with us. Go home and study hard over the first chapter of John; then you will see why we Christians believe that 'He was in the world and the world was made by him, and the world knew him not. He came unto his own' (unto the children of Abraham and Isaac and Jacob), and as you know, Ben—'his own received him not.'"

Then looking into Ben's troubled face, growing a little sullen of late, she said: "I pray every day that you yourself may become a Christian."

"Why?"

"Because, as the Bible says, 'the truth will make you free,' free from this anger, hate and longing for revenge. You will then want to be good and to do good; you will be happier for loving and knowing that you are loved; life will mean infinitely more to you than you can now imagine; and remember this: the very highest, best education which any human being can acquire comes from knowing more and more of 'Christ and him crucified.'"

When Ben had gone, Mr. Ilsley, who had been in the next room, said, "Why, you talk to Ben as if he were not a child almost in years."

"He is not childish in mind; intellectually, he is five years ahead of our boy."

"Oh, you unnatural mother," laughed her husband, "don't you admire our Johnny?"

"I admire and love him to his heart's content; but I cannot help seeing the truth."

"Don't try, dear," said Mr. Ilsley. "It is not a failing that threatens to be any too prevalent."

CHAPTER IV.

The winter went by; life in the old book shop was much the same from day to day. Ben had become an excellent clerk, but business was never so brisk that he could not find time during the day for study,

and his father encouraged him in this; perhaps because his conscience told him that Ben was entitled to the education he was not to get in the schools. Mrs. Ilsley had taken much trouble to get a line of study marked out for Ben by some of Johnny's teachers, and there was no lack of books. But ambitious and high-minded in some respects as was our Jewish lad, let no one think him held up as a character to be admired. Ben was all the time growing more suspicious, more full of bitter feeling; he was getting to be proud, arrogant and self-seeking. He told himself that if there was no one to look out for his interests he must think of them himself. Still many a time that long and dreary winter Ben was tempted to hide away and to cry as he used to cry when a little fellow. It was quite a comfort then to have Rachel slide in between the piles of dusty books and magazines, bringing her one-legged doll and a battered volume of fairy stories. She would remark that she had come to "keep him company," and often imparted solemn confidences to the effect that "it was just awful up-stairs."

Indeed, many times that winter Mr. Cohen must have recalled Solomon's words, in case he knew them, that "it is better to dwell in the corner of the house-top than with a brawling woman."

About the beginning of the Jewish New Year, Ben, remembering the promise to his grandfather, wrote a letter to Herr Weiller. He had been taught to be

very particular in the spelling and composition of anything put on paper, so, not quite satisfied with the first attempt, he wrote a second letter which pleased him better; this he sent and, unfortunately, he forgot to destroy the first draft. The more perfect one had been gone several days when one evening Mrs. Cohen was in high good humor at supper time. After the meal, she left Rachel to wash the dishes and put away things for the day; Rachel was more deft about housework than her aunt and was likely to improve with constant practice.

Finding her husband alone, Mrs. Cohen asked: "Cohen, who was Mr. Weiller of Berlin?"

"Why, there are dozens of Weillers there."

"Was any one of them a friend of your old father-in-law?"

"Yes, he knew one of them, a banker. He came once to our house to see him," said Mr. Cohen, looking more interested.

"Supposing the old man had money that he did not want you to know about—for Ben, it may be—would he have been likely to have left it in this Weiller's care?"

"Yes; very likely he would do just that. I tell you that old man must have had more thalers than I can account for; he used to have plenty, but he never wanted me to have the handling of a pfennig."

"Queer, knowing how you loved him," laughed his wife with a sneer; then she asked:

"What would you give to get on the track of that money now?"

"A good thrashing to Ben for not telling before where it was."

"Has he told now?"

"If he has not, how come you to know so much?"

"Have I told you a great deal yet?"

"Well, you're aching to tell," grumbled her amiable spouse.

"Then if I have anything to tell, it is because I am more than a match for you, your young one and the old man, all put together."

"Humph!"

"What if you knew that Ben had written this banker a letter telling him all about his grandfather's death and how the night that he died he told Ben to write every year, telling everything about himself? Suppose Ben wrote how much he wanted to have an education, such as the rabbi meant him to have; but that you did not intend him to have one that cost anything. Fancy his saying that you had married a very 'common sort of a woman that you first met on the steamer' (Won't Ben find out that I am rather uncommon before I get through with him?)! In fact, can't you imagine the kind of a letter he might write if the rabbi directed him, and if there was money in trust for Ben with someone who was to keep in the background?"

Mr. Cohen was lost in thought and did not rouse up

until she asked: "What would you say in a case like this?"

"Why, I would say that we ought to have the money; ain't I supporting the boy?"

"Of course you are, but how are you going to get the money, I should like to know?"

"Can't you think of a way?" asked Mr. Cohen in quite a civil tone. It was better to be polite to a partner who, after all, might prove to have remarkable business talents.

"To begin with, Ben will never get any answer to his letter because it is in my pocket instead of being on the way."

"He can write another."

"He must not be allowed to do that. He told the banker that any answer might be sent in care of those Ilsleys that he is so fond of."

"That must be stopped, too."

"Did this banker know much about your family?"

"He came once to the house and took afternoon coffee. He seemed pleased with Ben's mother, and he petted little Hannah, the child that died soon after."

"How old was this Hannah?"

"She would be about Rachel's age now."

Mrs. Cohen asked a great many more questions, and after midnight, when the crafty couple retired, Ben's letter was ashes, but in its place was to go another. This last was a very respectful letter from Ben's

father to the banker. In it he told of the rabbi's death at sea, and gave full details of a pathetic conversation which he said that he had with his father-in-law just before his death. The rabbi then spoke of his desire for Ben's education, and of all the arrangements that he had made toward that end. He had hoped to live longer, but now he must trust everything to his "dear son-in-law."

Wonderful to Mr. Cohen was the art with which Mrs. Cohen helped him to imply a full knowledge of whatever there was to know, and yet the equal art shown in writing nothing that could betray their real ignorance. But it was in the last half of the letter that her originality came out most boldly. She had Mr. Cohen tell of Ben's grief, of his wish to carry out all his grandfather's ambitions, how he had begun school, etc. Then Ben had an accident; he was run over, taken to the hospital, where he was making a fair recovery, when pneumonia set in and he died."

"*He died! Did he?*" ejaculated Mr. Cohen, naturally much surprised when told to write this.

"Of course he died; but first he begged of you to write to Herr Weiller and to tell him that, next to you, he loved his dear little sister Hannah Rachel, or Rachel Hannah, as you please, and that he wished with all his heart that Hannah might have all of the rabbi's money that would not by law go to you as his father. He wanted his little sister to have a fine education. Then tell about your shop, give your

address and tell him to advise you if there are any legal steps necessary for you to take before coming into possession of Ben's money."

"Suppose they will not go ahead without a lot of questions?"

"Probably they will not; but they are a long way off, and I have always noticed that the biggest lies will bear the hardest strain. If they find out our game, you can lay it all on me. Say that, at times, I am slightly insane, and I fancy that I am coming into money, or my friends are." Then she added:

"Yes, and at least we will find out if there is any money; and if there is, you ought at least to be charging up Ben's support against the time when he comes of age and can pay it."

"Well, you are a long-headed woman," mused her husband, as he turned off the gas. "It is a cheap trick and a mighty risky one, but I have seen poorer ones pan out pretty well."

Mr. Cohen knew that when Ben missed the letter it would be his first impulse to write another; so the next day he called him down-stairs and said that he had accidentally discovered his letter while going through his room. He told Ben sternly that he had done very wrong not to tell him at once of the whole matter, for his grandfather was an old man, almost in his dotage, and knew nothing of business. He himself knew, of course, there was money left for Ben in Berlin which might go a little way toward his sup-

port, but its management must be in his own hands, or it might all be lost. He forbade Ben to write another word to the banker, to whom he himself had already written, telling all that he needed to know. Moreover, Ben was never to go near the Ilsley house again or he would thrash him more soundly than ever. There was a gleam in his cold green eyes, as he uttered this threat, which made Ben know he was not to be disobeyed. Indeed, it did not occur to Ben that he could disobey, for he had been taught always to reverence parental authority.

When the door slammed behind Mr. Cohen, Ben began to sob, until a comforting thought came to him. He had already sent his own letter to Herr Weiller, and, if Mrs. Ilsley was right, God took care of the least as well as the greatest things in life, especially if we trusted and prayed to him.

Three weeks later, Mr. Cohen received a most provokingly non-committal letter from the cashier of the bank in Berlin, of which Herr Weiller was the president. They regretted their inability to give him the information which he seemed to desire, if they understood his letter aright. If, as he declared, money had been deposited with them, would he kindly write as to the exact amount and bring or send the papers showing these deposits? At the same time, he was requested to furnish certificates from the doctors, or other authorities, in regard to the deaths of the rabbi and of his own son Benjamin.

After reading this epistle, Mr. Cohen was not amiable. He did not admire his wife's business talents as much as he had done, and he rudely told her so. She, undismayed, said that she had a lawyer cousin who could prove that anybody living was dead and buried, if such proof was needed and well paid for.

It was a beautiful early morning in spring. Ben's father kept open shop on all days of the week, but on Sunday he took life easier, often making some pleasure excursion with his wife. This morning they had gone to the country to look at a house and lot which Mrs. Cohen had lately bought. Ben, left alone in the shop, was puzzling out a problem in mathematics, but he failed to keep his mind on it for he wanted so much to hear or to see the Ilsleys. He did not care for Mrs. Ilsley's religion, but he loved her and he wanted companionship with somebody young and full of life like Johnny. It was a good thing that he had even Rachel to talk to when lonesome, for she was as quaint as she was affectionate. He was in the rear of the shop and she standing in the open door; suddenly she appeared to Ben, her eyes big with surprise, saying: "There is a beautiful boy asking for you!"

"Hello, old chap! what have you been doing with yourself?" cried Johnny, falling on him like a lively bear; "we thought you were sick or dead or something."

"Yes, it was something. I could not come, but I wanted to see you," cried Ben, and his sparkling eyes were welcome enough.

"Well, now! Can't you come over to old Trinity with me? It is Easter, you know, and mother is waiting over there for us; she came down on purpose so we could find you. After service we can have a talk."

Ben stopped a minute to think. He could lock up the shop, but here was Rachel. She knew what his troubled glance at her meant. She was a timid little creature, not yet quite sure of the non-existence of those red-eyed, striped rats; but while her lip quivered, she said bravely: "Go, Benny, I can stay alone or *please* can you go borrow Mrs. Flarity's yellow cat for company?"

"Poor little kid!" said Johnny, with patronizing kindness, "why not take her along?"

Rachel's eyes danced, but she did not tease by one word. She could never bear to be not wanted by Ben. Ben looked her well over. Being a tidy little body, she was clean, if dressed very plainly; so he said to her delight: "Then run get your things on and we'll both go."

The streets were thronged with gayly dressed people and happy children; the Easter spirit making some as glad as the bright sunshine made the others. Rachel walked on air and Ben was happier than for days. When they reached old Trinity, both were

greatly impressed by the solemn beauty of the lovely old church, for neither of them knew anything about similar places of worship. To Ben, the white lilies at the altar and the sweetly ringing, triumphant music was like a vague revealing of some wonderful tidings —some grand uplifting truth, as yet not made known to him in fullness, but true and waiting for his recognition. What was this truth? Had it anything—or everything to do with the tender reverence, the glad serenity which he read on Mrs. Ilsley's face this morning? How good it must be if it made those who really received it so kind, so loving and so helpful as were Mrs. Ilsley and Johnny! They never seemed to think of doing good as of a tiresome methodical charity, but they acted as if they knew some sort of beautiful happy-making news which they wanted to share with the poor and the ignorant. Mrs. Ilsley had given him a warm hand grasp when he first came; he sat then by her side and listened attentively to the reading of the glorious chapters of the Bible which tell of Christ's resurrection. He was thrilled, in spite of himself, by the triumphant singing: "Christ the Lord is risen to-day!" and he heard, intent on every word, all the preacher had to say about the historic and the spiritual meaning of Easter, once and now—to all men, everywhere.

When the service ended, instead of going home at once, they lingered in the green old churchyard, which seems so beautiful and still, there amid the

rush and roar of city life, all around and outside its gates. Johnny and Rachel roamed a while among the ancient tombstones, but Ben lingered with Mrs. Ilsley. Seated by her in a still corner he knew she was studying his face before she said: "I wish you would talk to me to-day as you would talk to your mother if she were here with you," and she took Ben's roughened hand in her own soft one.

"What can I tell? She cannot help me," thought the boy, silent for a moment or two. A train on the elevated road thundered past; a robin in a tree above them sang as merrily as if he were in the depth of the woods; then, hardly knowing why, he told the whole story of his letter, of his detestation of his stepmother—all the revolt and wickedness of heart that had blackened life for him for weeks past. About some part of it Mrs. Ilsley said little; she gave Ben a letter that had come in her husband's care the day previous. Ben opened it and read that Herr Weiller had received his letter and another "about which he need not trouble himself, for whatever his grandfather had done was well and wisely done and no person unconcerned could meddle in his arrangements." In the meantime Ben might know that "his interests were in safe hands."

"So Ben, whatever that may mean, you have no need to worry. But what troubles *me* is your attitude toward your stepmother; you seem to hate her."

"I do hate her."

After that, if Johnny had not been polite and Rachel patient, both would have teased to go home before the long talk between Ben and Mrs. Ilsley was ended. But at last they were ready to go; although much of the Easter brightness had faded from the lady's face and Ben looked sullen. After they separated, Rachel wanted to talk about these "nice new friends," of the flowers, the music and all the events of the morning, but Ben did not listen nor answer.

Ben loitered about the shop for an hour or two, but no one came. He locked the door again, and going to his room, went down on his knees and drew out the Testament from the far corner under his bed where he had flung it in rage the day after his father found his letter to the banker. Something moved him to read how Jesus endured evil treatment from his enemies. He had a vague idea that if he had been wiser he could have proved to Mrs. Ilsley that morning that this meekness, this spirit of compassion and love, about which she talked so much, was not that which a God-man would have felt. Such a person would never have submitted to indignity. In short, Ben wished, once for all and as a Jew, to reject the whole gospel.

He opened the Testament and read page after page, and as he read, those marvelous words of Christ himself came true: "I, if I be lifted up, will draw all men unto me." In spite of himself, or, at least forget-

ful of himself, Ben found himself eagerly accepting—believing in this Christ who came to earth, lived, loved, died and arose again. Next, with a realization of what the blessed Saviour of all mankind was in himself, there came to Ben an almost overpowering sense of his own sin, his hard, hateful, revengeful spirit. Depressed by this, he sat in moody thought, when there flashed into his mind a recollection of that picture in the copy of "Pilgrim's Progress" at the hospital. Where the Pilgrim comes up from a dark valley with a great burden on his back; and the words written under it from the story were these: "He came to a place somewhat ascending, and upon that place stood a cross, and a little below in the bottom a sepulchre. So I saw that just as Christian came up with the cross, his burden loosed from off his shoulders and fell from off his back and so continued to do, until it fell into the mouth of the sepulchre, and I saw it no more."

"Oh," thought Ben, "if only there was somewhere a hill and a real cross, how quickly I would run there myself." Then he remembered certain words of Mrs. Ilsley's, and Ben added slowly aloud, unconscious that he was talking to himself: "But if I do as she says, I am no longer a Jew. I give up the synagogue, my people, all that grandfather must have held to——"

The afternoon sunlight struggling through the grimy window illumined the gilded pages of his Testament and brought out Ben's name on its cover.

If he took that book for his guide hereafter how hard life would be, for he must try to forgive and even to love his enemy, Mrs. Cohen. Then he forgot her in the misery of knowing his own dreary, lonely, wicked self. He reached out at last and, clasping the Testament in both hands, kneeled by his bed and really prayed, perhaps for the first time, out of his inmost heart; prayed for help and light and forgiveness. He began with well-remembered words from the Psalms of David, but soon he was just a bewildered lost child telling all his troubles. At the very end, there was one last struggle, between the old belief and the new. He stopped and hesitated; then, with all his heart, he said, "*for Jesus' sake,*" and so saying, Ben ceased to be a Jew.

It was growing quite dark when Rachel came to his door, saying: "Oh, Benny! it is awful lonesome out here and there are queer noises everywhere."

"Just made by mice, who are as afraid of you as you are of them; but come in, Midget."

"Will you tell me a story—tell me what things meant this morning; the lilies and the music, and talk about somebody dead."

"Do you know about Jesus Christ?"

"No."

Ben could easily believe that, so he said: "Well, Rachel, I will tell you all I know about Him."

Long afterward, Ben was glad to remember that his first impulse after seeking his Saviour was to lead

another there to the "green hill outside the city gates." As he talked to the child he was more and more earnest, for the story grew on him. His voice was full of feeling, as Rachel, who was all attention, had never heard it before. She was as tender-hearted as she was quick of perception; soon her big dark eyes were full of tears and she broke out: "Oh, Ben! how cruel they were to him!" Ben told of the resurrection and explained the morning service. She took in the glorious truth with simple-hearted faith, saying: "So you mean that He came back for a little while to his friends and then He went up to heaven, right through the blue sky! I shall always think of it—and He lives now and knows everything?"

"Yes, He died for us and He lives for us. He cares for every single little bird; think of that; and He wants us to love Him."

"Oh, I do, Ben. I love this beautiful good Jesus now. How could anybody help it?" cried the impetuous child; and Ben's conscience accused him for "helping it" as he had in the past. But now he told Rachel, "He can hear us whenever we shut our eyes and talk to Him."

"Why did you never tell me this before, if you knew all about Him?" suddenly asked the child.

"I *could* not before," said the boy slowly. Then he knew why his own burden had only just rolled off at the foot of the cross. A great thrill of awe and gladness went through Ben's whole being. He knew

now that in heart he was a Christian; he believed and loved, and knew that he was loved. No wonder that Rachel saw the glad light in his eyes, and was a little puzzled. He did not try to tell her of his past, but only attempted to teach her what was right for the days to come, if she, too, would follow the Master. She listened with meek acquiescence, for whatever Ben said must be best and right.

Ben sprung up at last, crying, "We have left the shop all dark, Rachel, and father will not like that.

He hurried down-stairs, she following fast. He had just turned the gas on when there came a sound like some very heavy conveyance rattling up to their door—then excited voices, commands to "Stand back there"—and was it a loud groan? Ben threw open the door at the first thundering knock.

There was a curious crowd, an ambulance, two or three policemen trying to keep back the street urchins, who at such a time seem to spring right up and out of the paving stones.

Two groaning, writhing sufferers were being drawn out of the ambulance. A man, evidently a doctor, was demanding to know where they should be carried.

"Railroad accident on the Jersey road; the woman is hurt the worst; man's back is bruised. Here, you boy there, where did you say? I do not know about getting them up those narrow stairs!"

It was done, however; for both Ben and Rachel obeyed the doctor's orders promptly after their first shock and terror. It seemed only a few minutes after they had gone down to light the gas before Mr. and Mrs. Cohen were each up-stairs under the doctor's care, and a nurse had been summoned. When all had been done that it was possible to do, the doctor was ready to answer Ben's questions. His father was not fatally injured, but might be crippled for life. Mrs. Cohen's injuries were far worse and were partly internal, and not yet apparent, but if complications did not occur, she would live some time. It was not likely that she would wholly recover. He advised keeping the nurse, who was a sensible middle-aged person.

The first time Ben saw his stepmother he felt a great throb of pity for the poor creature, now so unlike her old vigorous self. She was deathly pale, too weak to speak, and could only shut her eyes at his approach. It never occurred to Ben that she would not know that he was profoundly sorry for all his revengeful feelings and his old detestation of her. Even had he not become a Christian, Ben was not hard-hearted enough to deny her sympathy in this dire distress.

It was, of course, impossible for the nurse to go on in her care of Mrs. Cohen without being relieved, so that she herself could sleep and rest. Mr. Cohen was reluctant to hire more help, so a couple of kind Irish

neighbors undertook, with Ben and Rachel, to take turns in relieving the nurse. Ben proved the best attendant of them all, for he seemed to know what to do without being told. Mr. Cohen soon managed to hobble down to the shop, where, seated in an easy chair, he gossiped with chance callers, and told the story of the accident. Small sympathy did Mrs. Cohen get from him in the beautiful, long spring days when she had to lie there helpless, listening to the roar of city life outside in the streets, wondering if ever again she would be a part of the stream of human life drifting through them—thinking—thinking, as even the stupidest must think, when there is absolutely nothing else that they can do. At first, Mrs. Cohen always wanted Rachel rather than Ben to watch by her, for the reason that she was vaguely afraid of Ben, and this he finally suspected.

One pleasant trait of character in this woman had surprised Ben. She had always loved flowers, and, remembering this, he went out one day and bought a great fragrant bunch of hyacinths and lilies-of-the-valley. When he came next into her room he put them on her pillow. She caught the odor at once, and at sight of them her dull eyes brightened for the first time.

"That's good in Rachel," she muttered.

"I got them," said Ben; "I knew that you liked flowers."

"I do like them; but you do not like *me*."

"I did not like you when you were well and acted mean to me," said Ben frankly," but now I am just as sorry for you as I can be."

"Really now? I should think you would be glad that I was floored."

"That would be horrid in anybody."

"Well, if I ever get up, I'll remember this of you and be more decent to you," she said, after a long silence. After that Ben brought her flowers of some sort every morning.

He had done this about a week when one day she said: "Ben, you can tell your father that I sold that Hindoo poem, and the money for it is all right; he can have it any time."

A sudden anger flushed Ben's face at the thought of the beating which she had let him endure, then he realized that she must be sorry for it or she would not have confessed of her own accord.

CHAPTER V.

One Sunday, a few weeks after the accident, Ben took Rachel out for a walk, as Mr. Cohen thought, but when she did not come back with Ben, he asked where she had gone.

"I took her to a Sunday-school," replied Ben; "she ought to be taught something and to be more with other children; her aunt said that she might go."

"Has she gone to a Jewish school?" asked his father suddenly.

"No, father, I myself am not going any more to the synagogue, but when I can be spared I want to go to a Christian Church, for I believe now what the Christians teach. I cannot do anything else; I must believe in Jesus Christ, who was crucified by the Jews."

To say that Mr. Cohen was angry, would be to put in the tamest way the bitter scorn and fierce rage that was poured out on Ben, who meekly waited, knowing that nothing he could answer would do any good. It would not have surprised him at all, if he had been turned out of doors if he refused to give up this "new nonsense," as his father called his present faith in the Saviour. But Ben was needed now, and would grow more useful all the time; then, too, he was only a boy, and ridicule might bring him to his senses better than severer measures; or, so Mr. Cohen reasoned.

When Ben went up-stairs to serve his time in the injured woman's room, she asked, "What were your father and you disputing about? His voice was very loud."

"He is very angry, because I told him that I had become a Christian."

"What do you mean? Will you go into the Salvation Army, Ben, and wear a queer uniform?" asked Mrs. Cohen, who really was incredibly ignorant for a woman who had lived in a land of churches. There was real interest in her tone, and she was tired of

having nothing to think of that was disconnected with her condition of body and her unpleasant future. Ben, dimly perceiving this, began to tell her just a little of what Mrs. Ilsley had tried first to teach him. Mrs. Cohen listened so gratefully that by and by he talked from his heart and of that which he himself had felt and now believed.

"How queer!" she muttered to herself, rising on her elbow in her earnestness; "and you are happy, you say? And it has taken away your hateful feelings toward me? You used to look sometimes, Ben, as if you wanted to kill me or wished that some horrid thing would happen to me."

"Yes, I did feel that way; but knowing that I was hateful myself and wicked, when I began to see how good and loving the Saviour is—that broke me all up, Mrs. Cohen. I can't hate you now."

"But, perhaps that is because I am a poor miserable wreck now, who could not torment you, if I tried; if I was well and at my old tricks, what then? Would you not hate me?"

"I would try not to, and pray about it. Being a Christian has not made me a very good boy, but only one who wants to be good," said Ben, with such boyish frankness that tears came into those bold black eyes of hers, and Ben could scarcely believe that it was Mrs. Cohen who watched him with a wistful sort of gratitude whenever he rendered her any little ervice.

More wonderful still, one day she said, "Ben, suppose you read to me out of the Testament that Mrs. Ilsley gave you; I don't exactly know how the Bible goes; I never went to Sunday-school, as I can remember."

After that, Ben read to her and Rachel every day, without being asked, and she listened more eagerly each day; but never said anything about what she heard. Not a word was lost, however, for since she had asked her doctor a few searching questions about the chances of her ever getting well again, life and death had become dreadful realities to her. Life, because all of it that lay behind her, she now knew had been utterly selfish and dark, with actual sin. Death, because its awful shadow seemed creeping steadily toward her, each day nearer than the last.

One day Mrs. Ilsley came to ask about the accident, of which she had but just learned. Ben, without getting leave, took her immediately up to see his poor stepmother; for something told him the lady might find the way to another woman's heart as he could not.

Ben never knew what they said to one another, but after that, Mrs. Cohen seemed less troubled, and more at ease when he was with her.

Mr. Cohen rarely came up-stairs in these days. He said the exertion hurt him. He slept in the small lower room, where he had beaten Ben that winter day, and Rachel brought his meals to him in the shop. He cared nothing for the company of his wife, now. This

sad and dying creature was not the lively reckless companion whom he had known on the ocean. He took great pains to tell all the neighbors that her "mind was affected." It might be a convenient fact to urge, hereafter, in case a certain scheme of theirs did not work well.

One evening, after a day of great suffering, Mrs. Cohen said to Ben, "When I am gone, will you be good to Rachel? Her mother left money with me for her, but we have put it into that house in New Jersey that we went to look at the day of the accident. Your father holds the deed, and I fear that Rachel will never have her own; but it is all my fault. I led your father in everything of that kind, and now I can do nothing for Rachel."

Ben promised to be kind to the child, and then his stepmother, struggling for breath, said again, "I tried to do you a greater wrong; but I have told Mrs. Ilsley all about it, and she may prevent any harm from that. Will you forgive me, Ben, and can you be good to Rachel?"

"I will, I promise you; and now can you forgive *me, mother?*" asked Ben, with a sudden impulse, for which he was always afterwards glad; because a great light broke over her pale, drawn face.

"Oh, Ben," she whispered, "if you do forgive me and call me that, I can believe in your Saviour; I can think that He will save!"

In the morning she was brighter than usual when

Rachel gave her a cup of coffee, and then Ben went out for the flowers that he brought her every day. He was delayed and could at last only find a small cluster of sweet violets. He smiled to himself as he took them up-stairs, thinking, "I will tell her that the name for these in Germany is '*Kleine Stiefmutter*, or little step-mother,'" but when he went to put them on her pillow, she had gone away forever.

Then Ben, who had hated her when a Jew, put them by her cold cheek and sobbed, because he had come to love her and had made her love him, after the greater love of Jesus had touched both their lives.

In the weeks that followed, Mr. Cohen was hard to live with. First, he wanted to send Rachel to a Jewish orphan asylum, and was only hindered by some questions that Ben asked about the New Jersey property. With Ben he became much more severe, and after a time very unwilling that he should take so much time, or any time, in fact, for study. But one day all this was changed. A German lawyer, acting for Herr Weiller, called at the book shop and interviewed Mr. Cohen. He politely opened conversation by expressing a little natural surprise that the youth, whose death certificate he had in his pocket, given him by Herr Weiller, should be acting as clerk, in what looked like vigorous health, "When and how did Ben return to life?" if he might ask.

It was a puzzling situation; but, on the whole, Mr. Cohen came off better than a more honest man could

have thought possible. He laid all the blame on his "insane wife," now dead, and there was none to say aught to the contrary. Mrs. Cohen herself, in confessing all to Mrs. Ilsley, had borne the weight of the sin and deception.

The next day in the presence of this lawyer, Dr. and Mrs. Ilsley, Mr. Cohen, and a business agent of the Berlin bank, Ben learned that his grandfather had left money enough for his support, and an excellent education. Moreover, when he came of age, there would be more, if the whole sum had been wisely managed. Mr. Cohen, who was inclined to be talkative and assert himself, was promptly informed that he had no power whatever over this money, under the restrictions made by the rabbi, whose distrust of him was very evident. Dr. Ilsley was next appointed Ben's guardian, and many details in regard to the boy's future were well and wisely arranged.

Mr. Cohen had scarcely recovered from his disgust at this affair, when there appeared a very outspoken relative of Rachel's parents, who asked all sorts of straightforward questions about certain funds that Mrs. Cohen had held in trust for the child. The matter was never quite cleared up, but something was recovered for Rachel, and Mr. Cohen suddenly displayed a great affection toward Rachel, whom he wanted to adopt as his own daughter, but it was decided that she must go to an excellent school for young girls, one recommended by Mrs. Ilsley.

Then came a great temptation to Ben, one that he had scarcely strength to resist. He was invited to become an inmate of Dr. Ilsley's home, to share in all that life of refinement, culture and delightful Christian companionship. But a sentence haunted Ben all through that temptation, "Even Christ pleased not himself." Mrs. Ilsley told him that he was right when he said, "He is my own father. God put me where I am. I can't think my own mother would want me to leave him like this; every son has a duty to his father, and down in his heart, I am sure he loves me."

"You are right," Dr. Ilsley said, "and I ought not to have asked you to come to us. If you are a sincere Christian, you may lead your father to Christ; for even now he is not a strict Jew. Pray for this, Ben, and remember how your stepmother found the right way when once she was willing to learn it."

Now let us pass over eight or nine years and return to peep at our old friends. We will find the bookshop quite prosperous, enlarged, with several brisk clerks. Mr. Cohen has been successful; his manners have improved, and he has never tried any more illegal deeds. In time, he married a thrifty little German *haus-frau,* who has the highest respect and warmest affection for her tall stepson, Benjamin. Ben is about to be graduated from a famous college, where he has made a record to pass into the college traditions. What his future will be, God knows; but at present he is an

earnest Christian, who stands by the faith in Christ that he confessed when a boy, and whose high purpose in life is to win others to that faith.

Some vacation times, when Ben is expected home, his stepmother sends up-town inviting a certain black-eyed Rachel to come also on a little visit; for Rachel likes to meet her old-time companion, and to laugh again over her terror of the "red-eyed rats." Ben's friendship with Johnny held fast through all the changing years, and Mrs. Ilsley does not know how well Ben repaid her interest in him by the tact with which he watched and held back her own son in a time of temptation and strong impulse toward evil.

PHILIPPINA WELSER.

In the curious old church at Innsbruck, Austria, where Christina of Sweden gave up her faith as a Protestant, is a very fine tomb where rests the body of another noble lady, so unlike Christina that we want to tell you her beautiful story from her childhood.

About four hundred years ago there lived in the city of Augsburg a very rich merchant who had a little girl called Philippina. If you were to go to Augsburg to-day you could easily imagine just how it looked then, for the sleepy old place has not changed much. Philippina lived in a great mansion, plastered on the outside and then painted all over with bright pictures. Sometimes on such houses there were scenes from Bible stories; again they were strange fanciful creatures and wreaths of flowers. There was and still is a great square with statues, and at one side a grand cathedral having colored glass windows that shed over all within a gold or rose tinted light.

Philippina was a beautiful little girl, and there were few things that she could not have, if money could buy them. She cared very little about fine clothes and jewels, and if she thought of her beauty it was only

to be glad that she was pleasing to others. She learned whatever she was expected to learn; she worked the queer embroidery that we see in museums; she played on the harp and she sang like a bird. When, now and then, her father dropped into her purse a big round gold piece, she was happy enough to dance, thinking how she could help her poor people.

In those days great religious discussions were going on, for Luther had started the Reformation, and at Augsburg were held big meetings to settle that people might be Protestant if they liked, and what they were to believe as truth. Augsburg finally became a Protestant city, and the cathedral a Protestant church. Philippina was too young to understand all the arguments and debates going on, but she was not too small to be a loving little Christian. So when her gold piece was changed into many silver ones, she and her old nurse would go around the city into the homes of the poor and the sick or suffering. The Germans are poetical, and they used to compare her golden hair to the sunshine, and all loved Philippina. Then, as now, the idle and worthless hated the rich, but no one wanted any harm to come to her.

One day when Philippina was about sixteen she went into the cathedral where there was a great assembly of some kind. While she was watching the people the son of the Emperor was watching her. This Ferdinand, Count of the Tyrol, was an upright brave man who wanted to know the truth and to do right.

He was very unlike many dissipated young noblemen at his father's court. He was so pleased with Philippina Welser that he remained in Augsburg until he could see her; but she was no giddy girl to be flattered out of all sense because a man of rank admired her. Her father, too, would not give her to any man who was not as noble in character as high in rank, even if, as then, he was the son of an Emperor.

Ferdinand's father, however, was beside himself with rage at the very thought that his son should marry a woman who was not of royal blood. The Count of the Tyrol was a dutiful son; he did all that he could do to persuade his father that Philippina was like the "gracious woman" told of in the Bible, and that her "price was above rubies"; but it was all in vain. Then Ferdinand, being of age, and loving Philippina as she deserved to be loved, told the Emperor that he was old enough to decide for himself, and so he should marry the merchant's good and beautiful daughter.

Not long after that there was a wedding in Augsburg, and then the young people journeyed toward the Tyrol. There, in an old castle that you may see to-day on the hill near Innsbruck, they commenced housekeeping at Castle Ambras. There they set up a Christian household. They did not think and do exactly as they might have done had they lived in this age of the world, but they tried faithfully to keep the great commandment that bade them love God with

all their heart and their neighbor as themselves. Philippina was a young girl when she was married, and many a girl in her place would have fretted because she could not go to the gay and splendid court of her father-in-law and take part in life there, so making her young companions in Augsburg envy her. That was not Philippina's way; she went right on as she had begun almost when a child.

Do you ever think—you girls who read this story, that what you are at twelve, fourteen or sixteen—what you are doing with most pleasure—*that* you will probably go on being and doing when you are older? A silly unreliable girl is almost sure to be a sillier bad woman. Philippina was as happy as she was charitable, and all the poor knew her in the valley or across the river in the town.

To-day you can stroll up the hill from Innsbruck through the fragrant pine woods and can go all over the castle. In the great hall are various kinds of armor and relics, and in other rooms furniture kept by Ferdinand's descendants, who still own the castle. There are cabinets, organs, quaint carved bedsteads and enormous green and white terra cotta stoves, on one of which is worked out the Lord's Prayer, in raised letters.

Most interesting of all is the Countess Philippina's own room, where her high-backed chair stands near a window overlooking an exquisite landscape; but when the young Countess sat there very likely she

looked in and not out. Close by the chair is a funny, hooded old carved cradle. One golden-haired baby after another found its way into that cradle, and Philippina would have been very happy but for one trouble. The stern old Emperor would not forgive his son. Philippina the bride and Philippina the older wife had not been able to think of any way to touch that father's heart. But when two little boys had laughed up at her from that cradle they taught her a bit of heavenly wisdom. One day when they were little fellows, unknown to the Count, her husband, she dressed them in their finest attire and started away with them to the old Emperor's court. Getting leave to enter the royal presence, she came in, leading a child at each side and knelt before the old monarch. When he asked who these new comers were, no doubt two sweet little voices called him "Grandfather." It was no use to harden his heart then—grandfathers' hearts are alike, whether they beat under gold and ermine or rusty old coats, and somehow little children know the very shortest road right into these hearts.

Perhaps the Emperor saw his son again in one boy; perhaps his wife had blue eyes like the other; anyway he looked at them and then what could he do? Could he scold two such beautiful children for being born? Philippina, too, was looking up at him through tears. She was very beautiful; her only fault was loving his brave good son. Suddenly the Emperor decided that he could not live a day longer in enmity to his

son and daughter, nor without these grandchildren. He gave them each a title and wanted to keep both at court. But no! Philippina could trust no one else to teach her boys, and back she went to Castle Ambras with the good news. Then life went on as before.

Philippina lived to a good old age, and all through the years everybody in trouble climbed the hill to the Countess, once the merchant's little girl in Augsburg. The poor blessed her; the sick were comforted by her. She had not a drop of royal blood in her veins, but she was a true "daughter of the King." Because she lived for others' good, her name to-day, after almost four hundred years, is as sweet in the Tyrol as the blue forget-me-nots that never fail to come there in the spring. She is buried in the chapel of the old church in Innsbruck.

NELLIE'S TWO EVANGELINES.

NELLIE ANDERSON was the small daughter of a missionary to China. She was born in a great and wicked city, but knew nothing of heathenism for a long time, because her loving mother kept her close under her wing. She had a tiny nursery full of odd foreign toys that quite contented her, before the Christmas when her grandmother in New York sent her one of those wax dolls whose eyes open and shut, as one works a wire in their ribs. Oh, how Nellie adored that doll with its red cheeks and soft curls! How she petted and fussed over it all day long! Nellie was very energetic, and one night, wanting to put Evangeline to sleep quicker than usual, she gave the wire a jerk which caused her doll's eyes to drop into her stomach, or her neck; at any rate, Evangeline had now only two holes where her eyes had been.

Nellie's grief was pathetic, and if possible, she loved her blind child more than ever. In vain Mrs. Anderson offered to try a surgical operation which might restore Evangeline's eyes. Nellie refused to have her tortured; so little green spectacles were applied to the holes.

Now let us turn from this happy home to another place where dwelt a Chinese family. In that home the people much desired a baby boy. One day Heaven sent, instead, a little girl with skin as soft as a pale yellow tea rose, with dark eyes, and limbs which any sculptor would have admired. It was a child that in a Christian family would have found love and tender care. When the poor mother first saw the little girl she burst into tears. Its cruel old grandmother tossed it into one corner of the hovel, and it must have died but for a childless widow (its father's sister), who cared for it when she dared do so unseen. Still, in spite of neglect, the girl baby grew to be three months old, and the poor mother tried her best not to love it, knowing how she would suffer if she did. But mothers are alike, and this one cuddled her baby when no one heeded, and thought it most beautiful.

One day the father came home in a bad temper, and seeing the child, suddenly vowed that she had brought them all bad luck; he had just lost money. Next day the mother was sent on an errand across the city; suspecting trouble, she hurried as fast as she could, thinking how soft were her baby's tiny hands and how bright her dark eyes were growing. When she got back, there was no baby; only her sad-faced sister-in-law, who out of pity told her a lie. She *could* not tell her how human fiends had burned with hot irons her baby's eyes, and then at the command of the father had carried her outside the town and

flung her into a ditch. She told the mother instead that she had seen the baby cast into a river, where it had sunk and died without a struggle; it was the kindest thing that the pitiful heathen woman could think to say to her poor sister. The baby's mother knew that complaint was useless; she could only beg the gods never again to afflict her with a girl baby.

But life was strong in that little creature, so horribly maimed and flung away to die by starvation. There was no water in the ditch and soon after it was left there a native preacher passed that way. He heard a weak wail and knew its meaning. Gathering the tiny sufferer in his loose robe he carried her to the medical mission, where kind nurses did what they could to the eyes that never on earth would see God's radiant sunlight. For a few days they thought and hoped the child would die; but being fed, it took on strength and vigor. The eyeballs did not shrivel and there was nothing unpleasant in the little face.

Now to return to Nellie, who for another year had petted her eyeless Evangeline, never realizing how faded were her cheeks from constant kissing, and how flat her form had become from frequent hugging. But one day Evangeline reposed on the floor when in came Nellie's papa, who was a big man and who wore big boots as well. He strode across the room and, quite by accident, smashed Evangeline as flat as any pancake. Nellie's mother removed the remains of poor Evangeline and comforted Nellie as only a mother

could do. That afternoon, in order to divert her mind, she took the little girl with her to the mission house where she daily taught a class of Chinese women. It was a warm day and as they came into a pleasant shaded room Nellie gave a cry of delight. There on the floor sat a ten-months-old baby, clad in a little cotton robe that left free her plump and dimpled arms, her soft and pretty feet. The hair on her head was like black velvet, and no rosebud could be sweeter than her little red mouth from which came cooing sounds of content.

"Greedy little scamp!" laughed one of the nurses, "she has just drunk a great mug of milk and feels happy." Then she told the story of this our blind baby.

"Mamma! Oh, Mamma! I want her!" cried Nellie, before the story was half told. "Can I not have her in place of my Evangeline, who was blind, too?" Then darting to the baby she hugged and kissed her, while the baby's hands went feeling over her face—baby's way of seeing people.

Mrs. Anderson's eyes filled with tears; but all she said to Nellie was: "Ask your father."

"Papa" was entreated that very night. He thought a while and then told Nellie that he was a poor man on a small salary, but not so poor that he could not buy rice for another mouth. But if he should give Nellie the blind baby would she always share with her, would she "try to teach her only good things and good

ways, and be sure that she herself set her a good example? In fact, was Nellie ready to be a missionary to one heathen child?" Nellie listened, thought about it, and promised to ask God's help then to do her best. The next day the blind baby came, and papa named her "Evangeline," and said he hoped they would not leave her on the floor, for babies were soft and his boots were heavy.

The baby brought a blessing with her; she was always happy, always good and lovable. Nellie was naturally very hot-tempered and a little selfish, but now when she was tempted to fly into a passion, to sulk or act naughty, it was enough if any one pointed to Eva and said gently, "Remember!" Eva won love for herself; never having sight, all her other senses were keener; she was neater and more deft than Nellie. She could go anywhere, find anything about the house at midnight or at noon. Mr. Anderson got a Bible with raised letters for her when she was old enough to use it; but long before that she had learned by heart long Psalms and chapters in the Gospels, for her memory was wonderful. Perhaps she inherited the peculiarity, but she never seemed to forget anything once heard. By the time Evangeline was sixteen she was a useful faithful worker in the mission and a true Christian. God had given her a great talent for music and she composed exquisite airs on the piano in the mission room, with

only the little instruction some of the ladies could give her.

One day a wealthy Englishman, who was also benevolent, begged Mr. Anderson to let him send Eva and Nellie to England for a time, in order to let Eva have the training such a talent as she possessed demanded. When Mr. Anderson put the matter before Eva he was a little sorry to have her ask: "If I succeed could I make a good deal of money?"

"Yes, so I am told."

"Please let me think a while." She thought, and the next day said that if Nellie could go with her she would be glad to go. They went to London the next month. Nellie, who was now a devoted worker for missions, found her time full in showing people interested in such work the results of effort and the need of more workers and more money. She never left Eva, however, and the young Chinese girl studied from the first with intense concentration, her wonderful memory helping much, so that she forgot nothing, slighted nothing, and astonished her teacher.

One day, after about a year, Evangeline was asked to play at a grand reception in a nobleman's house, and that was the beginning of similar engagements, for which she was paid large sums. That first afternoon Nellie began to be much troubled lest all the praise and even flattery the girl received might make her vain, ambitious and self-seeking. When they were together that evening it hurt her to watch Eva

fairly gloating over the pile of gold she was fingering. She reflected, "Who knows what evil, money-loving traits may come to light now from generations of heathen ancestors?"

Suddenly Eva cried out in delight: "At this rate in one year I can earn enough to pay almost one hundred native teachers to go to our villages in China where my people have never heard of Jesus! Oh, Nellie, how good God has been to me!"

"Are you working for that, Eva?"

"Of course; for ever since I can remember I have prayed to find a way to teach my people; and when your father said I could make money, my heart sang for joy, because *many* teachers are better than one, and that one only a blind girl. I love music for itself, but oh, Nellie, when I feel this gold, and know it will send the gospel to many, many people in China, I think an angel could not be happier than I am! Will you stay with me five years, Nellie, then we will go back and give ourselves?"

Nellie stayed with her, and for the next few years the English people grew familiar with the slight dark girl who played the finest grandest music on organ, piano, harp or violin. They said the blind girl played as if inspired. When they fancied that their tumultuous applause thrilled her with pride, she was, instead, forgetful of self and seeing, with her inner sight, groups of Chinese mothers clustered around native teachers who were telling them of Christ who

said: "Suffer little children to come unto me and forbid them not"; mothers clasping little girls safe in their arms, or it may be, joyfully realizing that little lost ones were even then in the tender Shepherd's care. She was often fancying fathers listening to those teachers and repenting of such cruel acts as that which had made her blind for life. This was what inspired Eva when she played and the people applauded. She was giving all she had to give for Jesus, and every ship that went to China carried back her prayers, and many took back her golden gifts.

At the end of five years she went back, as she had said, and gave herself. She taught for the rest of her life; and sometimes, as she told how she was blinded and flung away into a gutter, poor mothers in the crowd about her would sob, wondering if by any chance Eva might be their very own. To Eva, too, would often come the thought "who and where is my own mother"? Then she would say to Nellie: "I have never seen the face of a human being—but I have prayed that the first redeemed one whom I meet in heaven may be my mother, and that God will let us love one another there."

TWIN LAPLANDERS.

'WAY up in the north of Norway, a little beyond the Arctic Circle, is a great hill on which roam large herds of reindeer. In the summer they shed their fur, and very moth-eaten or rat-gnawed do they look, with great bare patches on their back and sides, as they wander about feeding on the silvery gray moss with which the bleak hillside is covered. In the green valley at the foot of the hill is a queer little settlement. From a distance one might think it a village of American Indians, for the dwellings are much like wigwams; but it is really a Lapp settlement, and the home of our twins.

Away up here in the north there are Norwegian, Swedish and Russian Lapps. Some live by hunting and trading furs, but more roam along the coasts and depend on fishing. A company of these fishermen often come in summer to this part of Norway, turn their reindeer loose on the mountains, and fish or trade.

One of the Norwegian Lapps married a Swedish Lapp, and they were the parents of our twins. Probably these twins knew their father from their mother,

every time, but you would not have been able at once to tell the man from the woman. Each was short and fat, with a broad yellow face and turned-up nose; and they were dressed much alike, in old fur leggings and stout clumsy shoes.

When the twins were little, they were strapped into snug bundles like papooses. If it stormed, they snuggled in furs on the hut floor, near a stick fire, over which bubbled the dinner pot, and for playmates they had the dogs, always running in and out. When larger they were dressed like the old Lapps, in clumsy jackets and funny breeches, and they tumbled about out of doors with the puppies. Lapps love their children and are kind to them; but they never bother to wash them often, and as for dressing and undressing them every day, that would be too ridiculous! Clothes are made to be put on and be kept on until they are worn out. The mother of the twins, being Swedish had lived a few months once in Stockholm, and had seen clean homes and comfortable ways of living. When first married, she had tried to make her home like these she knew a little about; but it was no use, she could not do it. As the twins grew older, they asked so many questions that they were named "Why" and "Wherefore," or words meaning that in the Norse dialect.

Once, when Why was ill for several months, she was cared for as kindly as you might have been; but while you would have had nice jellies and delicious

broths, have slept in snow-white sheets, and been bathed every day, Why ate a stew of reindeer dried meat and some strong cheese. She felt very happy when she was out of pain again, and she snuggled down in the old furs, while her mother told her stories. These stories were all about her own past and little Why's future. When she was older, her mother wanted her to go to some town in order to learn more than other Lapp children; she wished that Why might go to school and learn to read, for books told of everything that ever happened on this earth; then, too, Why might live in a house full of such remarkable things as chairs, beds and earthen dishes with pictures on them. After these stories, Why would look about the smoky hut and secretly wonder what more folks wanted in a home than a fire, something to eat, and skins to sleep on. When Why was ten years old, this kind mother fell ill and died suddenly, leaving Why very lonesome. Her father and brother sorrowed, too, but they went away to fish, while Why had nothing to do but to think. Her mother, in a weak ignorant way, had been a Christian. She could not read, but, when in Sweden, she had been taught a simple faith, and all she learned then she took into her heart, and afterwards tried to live aright. She taught her children all she knew, and, as little Why was rather brighter than most Lapp children, after her mother died she began to understand more of many things. Summer days, when the sun was

warm and the snow on the distant mountains was white against the bluest of blue skies, when the great round buttercups and the fleecy bog-cotton all were in bloom, Why used to curl down out of doors, and, true to her name, all her thoughts ended in "why?"

Wherefore was not stupid; he liked to talk over these strange things with his sister, if he had time; he was at work all day, and at night was always sleepy. Why's father only grunted if she asked him hard questions, or, when she kept on, he answered, "I can wait"; and Why understood that he must die before he knew himself where heaven was.

One evening about ten o'clock it was as light as six in summer to us. Wherefore came rushing into their hut to get out a lot of queer horn spoons, with little jangling rings on them, and some other rude curios that Lapps sell to strangers. He told Why that he saw several *stolk-yearre* or native wagons coming down the road, and that meant visitors from some steamer.

Now, Why had washed her little yellow face only a day or two before—she was very neat for a Lapp—but she glanced at her hands, which were certainly dirty, so waited to wash them, thinking all the time how absurd it was when they would be in the same state by the next day. Then Why tied about her shoulders her one piece of finery, a small red shawl. She was a quaint figure as she hurried out of the hut

in her little breeches and jacket, after Wherefore, who wasted no time on his toilet.

The party of strangers had arrived and were greatly interested in peeping into the huts and walking round among the Lapps.

There was one man who went everywhere, talking in Norwegian, Danish, or Swedish, and he seemed interested in all the young Lapps. Why noticed that when he talked with the women some seemed provoked, some laughed, pointing to their husbands, while others shook their heads in quick refusal. This man was an agent who had charge of the Lapp settlement at a large fair or exposition. He was trying to persuade some of these people to go back with him. Why interested him, for she looked as pretty as a Lapp child ever looks. Their eyes are small, their cheek bones high, and they seem old, but Why had some color, her eyes were bright, her clothes cleaner, and her clumsy shoes were tied; then, by contrast to the others, her shawl was rather fine. After talking with her a minute, the man went to find her father, and they had a long conversation.

In a few minutes the father called Why into the hut and told her that she was going now to Sweden to learn those things that she was always asking questions about. This was a chance that her mother would have wanted him to improve. The father patted Why's furry shoulders, and told her to take anything she wanted with her, and to be a good girl;

then saying good-bye, he went outside to enjoy the commotion there. A queer father, you think, but he was a kind one, as Lapp fathers go. Wherefore was more excited, and helped her to hunt for some souvenir of her mother; but there was really nothing except the dinner-pot and a suit of half-worn clothes. The first would be needed, and the last was too large for Why. Finally they found a small wooden spoon, and, tucking that in the bosom of her jacket, she looked about the old hut in farewell.

The man suddenly looked in and called, "Come here," and then, "Follow me," and as she pattered out after him she took courage to ask "Where?"

"First to the steamer, and after that to—where you will be happy," returned the man, kindly.

Why shook hands with her father, brother and friends. Some of the Lapp women with little girls scowled at her father. He helped Why into the wagon, and away rushed the coffee-colored nag up hill and down dale to the steamer landing. Why followed her guide on board the boat, where he put her in the care of a kindly chambermaid, who answered all her questions. She told her how to sleep in a berth with sheets, to sit at a table, and how, by watching others, she could learn to behave like the people round her. But we cannot begin to tell you, in detail, how the time went by for several days.

After a journey that was all very wonderful to Why, they reached Stockholm. If Why had read of fairy-

land, she might have fancied herself there; for all in and about that city are lovely streams and little parks and light and gayety and music, and in the very center of this gay life Why was to live at a place called Skansen. Skansen is a permanent exposition of all things, modern and ancient, relating to Scandinavia—a kind of great fair with a great "midway." It is in the big park near the city, and visitors are always coming and going; there are concerts and national music and dancing, booths for bric-à-brac, and specimens of industries. Here are brought together a few, at least, of all the people in Scandinavia, who live in homes made just like their own homes.

There had been two settlements of Lapps here; one of those from the farthest north, the rudest sort and least civilized, and another of Swedish Lapps. Most of the first had grown tired of the place and gone away during the absence of the agent; so they concluded to put Why with those who talked Swedish and lived in a way that the little girl thought quite remarkable. Their cabins were clean for visitors to inspect, their clothes were new and gay with barbaric ornaments, their food was varied, and all their life more or less influenced by contact with a complete civilization. One of these women had lately lost a little girl, and she was disposed to like Why, who soon fitted into this new life. She learned easily the new dialect, she was fond of showing the place to visitors, of turning herself all about while they felt of her clothes and asked

no end of questions about the dogs and the reindeer and if she liked it at Skansen.

In six years a young girl can change very much. Let us pass over that length of time and then return to Skansen, to see what the years have done for Why. If we had happened to go there one afternoon in midsummer, we might have found someone else seeking Why, too. This was a plainly dressed woman with a very lovely face, and known to the poor of Stockholm as a kind of city missionary. Only a few knew that she was a woman of high rank and related to the King of Sweden. In a still higher way, she was herself the daughter of a King, as is every earnest Christian woman. This woman wasted no time, as we might have done, in looking for a young girl in the clumsy Lapp costume. She went past the platforms where people were dancing and singing, past booths for the sale of sweets and lemonade, until she came to a little bazaar of curios, where stood a bright-looking girl of sixteen in a scarlet jacket, a white blouse, a gay striped skirt, and an odd little pointed cap perched on her head.

"Will you come and sit a little while with me in the shade, Why?" asked the woman. Why called another girl to take her place at the counter and went with the woman to a little arbor. At first the woman asked her all about her work and her companions; then she asked Why to tell her of her mother and all she remembered of her old home. She listened atten-

tively, and then told Why that she had watched her for quite a long time, and had seen an improvement in her looks and language and manners. Skansen was not a good home for a girl who had not with her a wise mother.

Why looked surprised and said that she was happy; she liked to sell things to people who laughed and talked with her. Then, when work was over, there was the fun of roaming round in the great lively place, always full of excitement.

"But, my dear girl, I am sure this was not the life that your mother wanted for you."

"I have learned a good deal," said Why, rolling her apron string over her finger.

"But is it the knowledge best worth having, Why? Do you care about anything but gay clothes, dancing, singing and fun?"

Why blushed and shook her head; then she had to admit that, although she could read, she had no Bible, she never went to any church, she idled away the Sabbath day as a holiday. As the woman talked, Why realized what a foolish butterfly kind of life she really led. Her heart softened in thinking of the days when she was so eager to know about the heaven where her mother had gone; she never thought of dying nowadays, nor of living for anything but "fun."

All the same, Why was very much startled when the woman urged her to leave Skansen, to come into

Stockholm and become a maid in the family of a Lutheran minister. His wife would teach Why to cook, to sew, and to do many useful things of which she was ignorant.

Why refused to go; in her secret heart she thought that it would be a stupid dreadful life. But the woman came every few days until, at the end of the summer, Why consented to go away with her. It was well for Why's future that her place was filled at once and the agent would not take her back at Skansen, for she was very discontented in the first weeks at Stockholm. Instead of music and dancing, she had quiet work in an orderly home. She had to put away her finery and wear the simple suitable dress of a maid. But she had good sense, and after a time she grew interested in cooking and making a home pleasant, and little children amused her, while she learned to care for them.

Sometimes now in the night, Why thought about her father and her twin brother and wished she could hear from them; but they were wandering Lapps and spent the seasons in different places, so she hardly knew where to get on their track. One Sunday, when Why was almost eighteen years old, she heard a missionary preach of the joy he had felt in carrying to the heathen the blessed gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ. Why could not forget that sermon; she kept thinking of her own people, and of how ignorant many of them were. They were not heathen in the sense

that they had never heard of the Saviour, but few of them could read.

Then, like a voice out of the dark, these words seemed to come to Why one night when she was wide awake and thinking of her childhood: "You might go back to your father and brother. You might take your Bible and teach the women and children what you have learned."

The minister found out that her people were again at Harstad, and there Why returned. She clad herself once more in the usual dress of the women; only she meant to show them how they might be neater in their habits.

"Remember that Lapps will be Lapps, and that their ways and customs often grow out of the necessities of their lives, so that you can modify only a few of these, now and then," the wise minister's wife had said. Why had to keep this in mind; for, although her father and brother received her kindly, they hardly knew what to do with a grown-up daughter and sister. Still her father had just lost a second wife, and there was a little sister now in the hut for Why to love and care for. At first all the women and girls kept aloof from her, but Why went right to them when they were sick, and helped them in every way. She was a little careful not to begin to teach by word of mouth too soon, waiting until they liked and trusted her.

When she had been back a month, her brother

married a Lapp girl who had lived for a time in Christiania, and who wanted her home comfortable and clean. So Why had a helper, and the two women's influence spread. However, if this kind of teaching had been Why's highest motive in leaving Stockholm, she would have soon given up in despair. But she had not returned merely to show them better ways of cooking and of caring for their sick.

Why had brought with her a number of Bibles, and, day after day, she taught all the young people who would learn to read. Whenever a group of women with their children would listen, she would read to them the beautiful old stories, the Psalms and parables, explaining what they did not understand. Out of these readings grew an informal Sunday service, and the men dropped down on the turf, liking best to hear Why sing with the children.

The Lapps did not think themselves heathen, and they did not call Why a missionary; but that was what she was for more than ten years. Sometimes she grew very weary and longed for a home like the minister's; but she never regretted her decision.

Then her father died and Why went to live with her brother. His hut soon began to be quite full of little Lapps; but Wherefore's wife was a good woman and able to teach them. One summer when the Lapps had wandered back to Harstad, there came a Norwegian fisherman, a sober, God-fearing man, who had a great deal of business in the Lapp settlement.

He often came to Wherefore's hut to talk with him—or to his sister. He told her that he had built himself a neat little cabin, made his own furniture, as thrifty Norwegians can do, and now he wanted a good wife; he talked about this most frequently to Why. He must have been an excellent talker, too, for he convinced Why that it was good missionary work for a woman to make a home happy. That same summer there was a wedding in the nearest church, and after that Why had the home for which she had longed. You would have laughed at her delight in a rag carpet and the cupboard that her husband made and painted a beautiful pea green.

Yes, she was as happy as the days were long, and you know in Norway the summer days have no end. Then, after a year or two, Why was just as happy all through the dark and sunless winter days; for in her warm cosy cabin was the funniest wide cradle, very like a fat water-trough, and that was painted bright red. Inside were twins again; their wee noses turned right up, their skin almost as yellow as an Arctic buttercup; their eyes were small and their mouths big; but their mother and father wondered every day if the good God ever gave any other parents two such beautiful children.

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O.S.E.